

# 'BAMA

INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

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## Inside • Golf Success

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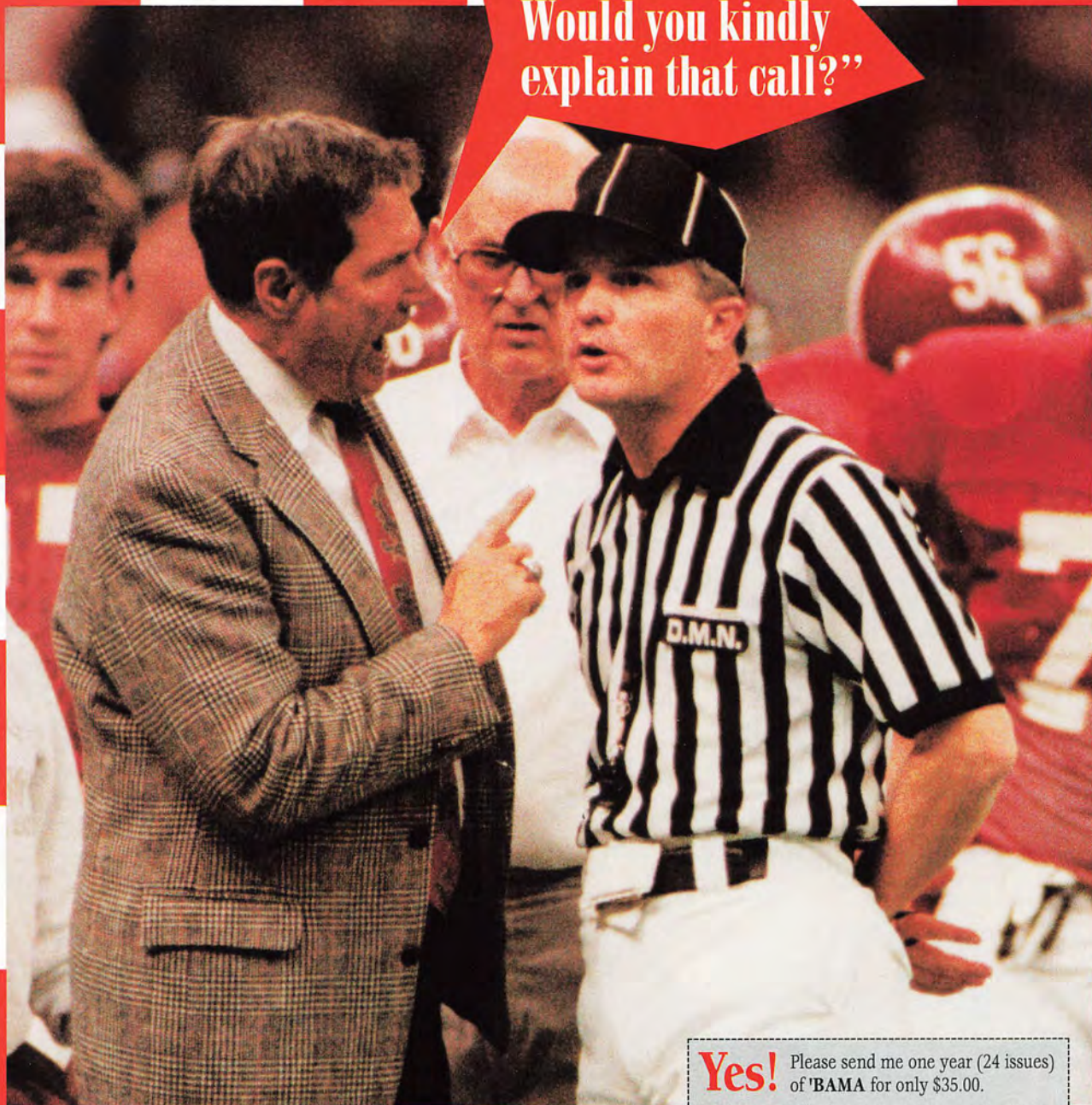
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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

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Barry Fikes Photo



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# That's What We're Looking For

by Kirk McNair

Tide football team made progress in all areas in spring, and should be a strong team this fall

One of the favorite shouts on a football practice field is a coach yelling, "That's what we're looking for!" It means a player has carried out his assignment. This spring the Crimson Tide football team gave the coaching staff what it was looking for in almost every respect.

The defense started the spring ahead of the offense and finished the spring ahead of the offense, and if that had not been the case there would have been cause for concern. Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings said prior to the beginning of drills that his primary concern was the offensive line, and the offensive front will be the main area of focus when drills resume in early August. Nevertheless, progress was made on the offensive line and it should be adequate in the fall. There is also a little worry about depth in the defensive backfield, but that stems in part from Defensive Coordinator and Secondary Coach Bill Oliver ranking as high on the pessimist scale as he does on the coaching ladder, which is lofty.

Elsewhere, the grades would range from good to great.

One very encouraging aspect of the spring was the lack of injuries. Although returning starting quarterback Jay Barker was unable to take part in contact drills and even though backup quarterback Freddie Kitchens was hobbled in the final half of practice with an arm injury suffered while pitching for the baseball team, the quarterbacks made progress. The only other position hit by injuries was the wide receiver corps, where split end Chad Key suffered a broken finger and flankers Toderick Malone and Marcell West suffered pulled hamstring muscles in the first half of practice. All were full speed for the second half of drills after spring break.

As last year, the Alabama coaching staff did not immediately name the winners of the various spring



Defensive end Darrell Blackburn (44) made life miserable for Tide quarterbacks this spring, including Lance Tucker in the A-Day Game. Steven Fikes Photo

awards, most of which are for improvement. This year the competition should be very good at a number of spots for the awards.

Ozell Powell, Elverett Brown and Darrell Blackburn would be good candidates for the most improved player in the defensive line. At least four linebackers—Paul Pickett, Ralph Staten, Tyrell Buckner and John Walters—would be candidates for various awards. Blair Canale, Eric Turner and Cedric Samuel all made great progress in the secondary.

Offensively, the most improved receiver could be a wideout, such as Toderick

Malone or Marcell West, or tight end Patrick Hape. The offensive back award could go to fullback Tarrant Lynch or tailbacks Sherman Williams, Brian Steger or Curtis Alexander. Jon Stevenson, making a position change from guard to center, might get the most improved offensive lineman award, but guard LaRon White probably improved the most from day one.

Even a coach who doesn't believe it will say that the most important part of a football team is the defense. Stallings believes it, and that belief is evident



in the number of top athletes assigned to the defensive side.

Not too many years ago Alabama had a real shortage of defensive linemen. Not any longer. There may or may not be an Eric Curry or John Copeland or two in this group, but overall depth and skill makes this potentially the strongest defensive line ever. While some make light of Alabama changing from a basic 3-4 to a 4-3 defensive alignment because the Tide uses so many different schemes, the change appears to be quite positive. In addition to taking advantage of so many top defensive linemen by having four in the game together, several Tide linemen are likely to be much better players in a four-man front than in a three-man front, Coach Mike Dubose said.

Bama's top all-star candidate in the defensive line should be senior Dameian Jeffries, but teams attempting to avoid Jeffries will run into plenty of trouble from the likes of Elverett Brown. A few linebackers have been converted to defensive ends, and one who appears to be a standout on pass rush situations, particularly, is Darrell Blackburn. Blackburn is so quick that he is almost unblockable, and he is slowly gaining the size and strength to take on that rare blocker who does contact him.

If there is a disadvantage to the 4-3 defense it is Alabama having so many quality linebackers, and only three being able to play at one time. The new alignment calls for a strongside linebacker (who will play on the side of the line where the offensive tight end lines up) who is primarily run-oriented, a middle linebacker, and a weakside linebacker, who will have more pass rush and coverage responsibility.

Bama was about three-deep at the three linebacker spots in the spring, even without three men who did not take part in drills. Middle linebacker Jeff Torrence



Willie Gaston (22) could be used either at safety or at cornerback in 1994. Dameian Vallery (25) was victim of a Gaston tackle in the A-Day Game.

Steven Fikes Photo

missed spring training as he is recovering from off season surgery, while senior outside linebackers André Royal and Will Brown are still working to re-join the team after being suspended late last season. Most of the compliments for spring work went to the young linebackers, redshirt freshman Pickett and sophomores Staten and Buckner. Returning starter Michael Rogers did not have a great spring for about the fourth straight spring, but Rogers has a history of answering the bell in the fall.

The secondary needs at least three cornerbacks (with at least one who can play both the wide side of the field and the short side of the field) and at least three safeties (at least one of which can play both strong and free safety). The improvement of Canale at safety was a real bonus of spring training. The Tide seems to be well-stocked with safeties. Sam Shade is a bona fide all-star candidate at strong safety and Eric Turner, who has lost the weight he had gained a year ago (when he thought he was going to be a

fullback) had an excellent spring. Turner appears most likely to be the fifth defensive back in Alabama's nickel package. The Tide's third strong safe-

ty, Andre Short, is one of the team's hardest-hitting football players.

Willie Gaston was a fine safety a year ago, not so fine when forced to make the late switch to cornerback after Antonio Langham was declared ineligible. Gaston worked both positions in the spring, but appears better as a weak safety than as a corner.

Tommy Johnson is solid at one cornerback spot and Samuel made great strides at the position. Beyond that are walk-ons, and the Tide may have to have help from this year's recruiting class, notably junior college transfer Brad Ford.

**T**he changes on offense with new Offensive Coordinator and Quarterbacks Coach Homer Smith on board were not as evident in the spring as they may be later. However, changes were made in the snap count, in how plays are called, and in some plays.

The big question among fans



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regarding the offense isn't the line. It's the quarterback position, the most important and most visible position on the field. Can Jay Barker make it back? If anyone can, Barker can. He's one of the most dedicated athletes ever at Alabama. Can Brian Burgdorf perform each week at the level he performed in winning the most outstanding player award in last year's Gator Bowl? Burgdorf is no great passer, but he does have very good quarterback skills. Can Freddie Kitchens develop the raw talent he shows and become a polished quarterback? No one doubts it. Can Lance Tucker grow a few inches? Probably not, and that's a shame, because lack of height is the only qualification the red-shirt freshman is missing as a quarterback. The general question—Who will be the quarterback in the fall?—won't be answered until shortly before opening day, but if Barker comes back healthy for August drills, make him the favorite. One school of thought is that Kitchens might be redshirted if Barker and Burgdorf are one-two so that Kitchens doesn't "waste" a year of eligibility.

Stallings wanted to come out of spring training knowing a two-deep on the offensive line. He may have that knowledge. Two redshirt freshmen right tackles, Joel Holliday and Chris Jordan, could have that spot secure for several years. Joey Harville is a solid left tackle. Kareem McNeal has the talent to be a good one, but could stand a dose of aggressiveness.

Other than Belser, a junior, the guards are young and promising. Center is the area of greatest concern. Tide coaches believe Stevenson will continue to improve and be a good center. However, there are mixed feelings among the coaches about the progress made by the back-up centers. There's work to be done at center when fall drills begin. One overall improvement in the line from last



Sherman Williams didn't have a great A-Day Game, but he had an exceptional overall spring training and goes into 1994 as the favorite to be Bama's starting tailback.

Barry Fikes Photo

year is that technique is believed to be more sound.

Tight end is in good shape with returning starter Tony Johnson and much-improved Patrick Hape. Josh Niblett, who has seen time at quarterback and fullback in the past, is the third-teamer now, but most expect incoming freshman Rod Rutledge to be in contention for playing time at tight end in the fall. Although the tight ends weren't used as receivers in the spring game, the rest of spring drills indicated they will be heavily utilized in the fall.

Weight loss made for a big gain in the Alabama backfield. Both fullback Tarrant Lynch and

tailback Brian Steger shed pounds and made improvement. Lynch is solid as the number one fullback, despite improvement by Taurus Turner. Sherman Williams probably had the best spring of the tailbacks, but he's not as big as Steger and Curtis Alexander. Dameian Vallery did not have as good a spring as the other tailbacks.

In this year's National Football League draft, Bama's starting wide receivers—Kevin Lee and David Palmer—were both chosen in the second round. At the end of spring training the Tide did not have receivers equal to those two. Curtis Brown may not have re-gained

all his speed after under going knee surgery last summer (and a little clean-up surgery this winter). Special mention should be made of Rhondi Gibson. Gibson, who originally signed with Auburn, was a tailback on the scout team last year as he sat out a transfer season. Plans were to try him at cornerback this spring, and he worked there a few days and seemed to be doing well. But when three wide receivers were injured in the early part of drills, he was moved to flanker, and that appears to be his best position.

**T**here is not a lot of work on the overall kicking game in the spring. There is a history of using a large number of new players in coverage and return positions, so most of the kicking game will be put in this fall when the signees arrive.

Stallings felt reasonably good about the kickers with place-kicker Michael Proctor and punter Bryne Diehl returning. And there are adequate men behind them. One area of concern was the deep snapper, and Chester Lewis made great improvement through the course of the spring. Although the kickoff return men probably won't be determined until fall, Rhondi Gibson showed both last year as a scout team player and this spring that he can be a good one, albeit no David Palmer.

### 'BAMA Takes Break

With the end of the school year, also comes the end of the monthly publishing schedule for 'BAMA. The next issue will be the August issue, to be mailed in late July.

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# Guess At A Depth Chart

Although the Alabama coaching staff does not issue an official depth chart at any time, at the conclusion of spring training a reasonable guess can be made as to how the Tide can expect to line up when fall drills begin in early August. This depth chart does not reflect where any newcomers—freshmen or junior college transfers or others—might fit in. It also includes four men—quarterback Jay Barker, linebacker Jeff Torrence, defensive end Anthony Dowdell, and offensive tackle Rory Segrest—who did not participate in full drills because of injuries, and two men—outside linebackers André Royal and Will Brown—who did not participate for disciplinary reasons.

## OFFENSE

### Split End

- 19 Chad Key (6-4, 210, Jr.)
- 85 Curtis Brown (6-3, 189, Jr.)
- 84 Roman Colburn (6-0, 180, Sr.)

### Left Tackle

- 60 Joey Harville (6-5, 285, Sr.)
- 74 Kareem McNeal (6-5, 287, Jr.)
- 66 Tim Barnett (6-5, 287, Jr.)

### Left Guard

- 64 Maurice Belser (6-2, 289, Jr.)
- 68 Will Friend (6-3, 270, Fr.)
- 79 Jeremy Pennington (6-3, 270, Soph.)

### Center

- 69 Jon Stevenson (6-3, 275, Sr.)
- 71 John Causey (6-1, 260, Soph.)
- 53 Darrell Smith (6-2, 265, Soph.)

### Right Guard

- 51 LaRon White (6-2, 272, Soph.)
- 72 Pete DiMario (6-5, 270, Soph.)

### Right Tackle

- 50 Joel Holliday (6-4, 275, Fr.)
- 56 Chris Jordan (6-6, 290, Fr.)
- 70 \*Rory Segrest (6-5, 274, Jr.)

### Tight End

- 5 Tony Johnson (6-5, 248, Jr.)
- 38 Patrick Hape (6-5, 252, Soph.)
- 16 Josh Niblett (6-2, 210, Jr.)

### Quarterback

- 7 \*Jay Barker (6-3, 220, Sr.)
- 14 Brian Burgdorf (6-2, 190, Jr.)
- 9 Freddie Kitchens (6-3, 200, Soph.)
- 6 Lance Tucker (6-0, 175, Fr.)

### Fullback

- 45 Tarrant Lynch (6-1, 224, Sr.)
- 30 Taurus Turner (6-1, 200, Soph.)
- 49 Jeff Foshee (5-9, 207, Sr.)
- 41 Anthony Burroughs (5-11, 208, Jr.)
- 29 Tracy Cummings (6-0, 235, Fr.)

### Halfback

- 20 Sherman Williams (5-10, 193, Sr.)
- 28 Brian Steger (6-3, 210, Soph.)
- 32 Curtis Alexander (6-1, 208, Fr.)
- 25 Dameian Vallery (6-2, 200, Fr.)

### Flanker

- 80 Toderick Malone (6-0, 185, Jr.)
- 37 Rhondi Gibson (5-10, 185, Jr.)
- 1 Marcell West (5-11, 177, Soph.)
- 88 Marion Jackson (5-11, 150, Fr.)

## DEFENSE

### Left End

- 91 Dameian Jeffries (6-4, 274, Sr.)
- 97 Vann Bodden (6-4, 258, Jr.)
- 54 \*Anthony Dowdell (6-1, 240, Soph.)
- 77 Steve Thompson (6-5, 270, Fr.)
- 79 Michael Ray (6-5, 305, Fr.)

### Left Tackle

- 75 Shannon Brown (6-5, 263, Jr.)
- 94 Kendrick Burton (6-6, 290, Jr.)

### Right Tackle

- 78 Ozell Powell (6-5, 275, Soph.)
- 96 Bryan Thornton (6-7, 280, Jr.)

### Right End

- 76 Elverett Brown (6-5, 266, Sr.)
- 95 Kelvin Moore (6-3, 240, Soph.)
- 44 Darrell Blackburn (6-4, 244, Soph.)
- 81 Edgar Walker (6-4, 240, Fr.)

### Strongside Linebacker

- 42 Paul Pickett (6-3, 230, Fr.)
- 55 Fernando Davis (6-3, 225, Soph.)
- 46 John Tanks (6-4, 226, Soph.)
- 36 \*André Royal (6-3, 230, Sr.)

### Middle Linebacker

- 90 John Walters (6-2, 225, Jr.)
- 52 Michael Rogers (6-1, 232, Sr.)
- 92 Tyrell Buckner (6-1, 235, Soph.)
- 53 \*Jeff Torrence (6-1, 230, Jr.)

### Weakside Linebacker

- 41 Ralph Staten (6-3, 200, Soph.)
- 57 Lamont Floyd (6-2, 240, Soph.)
- 17 \*Will Brown (6-1, 225, Sr.)
- 50 Howie Fell (6-1, 225, Jr.)

### Left Cornerback

- 10 Tommy Johnson (5-10, 180, Sr.)
- 40 Mickey Conn (5-10, 175, Sr.)

### Right Cornerback

- 22 Willie Gaston (5-11, 183, Sr.)
- 13 Cedric Samuel (5-9, 170, Soph.)
- 8 Tracy High (5-9, 175, Jr.)

### Strong Safety

- 31 Sam Shade (6-1, 190, Sr.)
- 39 Eric Turner (6-1, 200, Jr.)
- 23 Andre Short (5-11, 205, Fr.)

### Safety

- 24 Blair Canale (6-3, 199, Soph.)
- 26 Michael Ausmus (5-9, 178, Jr.)
- 27 Danny Davis (6-2, 213, Sr.)

\*Did not participate in spring training

## SPECIALISTS

Placekicker—Michael Proctor, William Watts, Matt Wethington  
 Snapper—Chester Lewis, Jackson Cook

Punter—Bryne Diehl, Hayden Stockton  
 Holder—Bryne Diehl, Carl Albright



# Steger, Jeffries Lead Crimson Win

Anyone who goes to a spring football game looking to see a good game is probably in for a disappointment. The thing to look for is good football players. From that standpoint, the estimated 46,700 who took advantage of free tickets and a beautiful day should have enjoyed the somewhat boring game played at Bryant-Denny Stadium on April 16.

The A-Day Game is actually the 15th and final practice of the spring, and in many respects the least useful for coaches. However, it gives the players something to look forward to (beyond the end of spring

## Scoring

Crimson	7	3	0	7	-	17
White	0	0	0	6	-	6
Crimson-Steger, 54 rush (Wethington kick)						
Crimson-Wethington, 35 field goal						
White-Alexander, 4 rush (pass fail)						
Crimson-D. Davis, 70 interception return (Wethington kick)						

training) and, therefore, serves as a motivating tool for those 14 real practices.

Although Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings divided the teams as fairly as possible, the Crimson looked to be the favorite with Brian Burgdorf at quarterback and Jon Stevenson at center. The Crimson

situation was made even more promising when Freddie Kitchens, quarterback for the White, was limited by an arm injury suffered while pitching for the Bama baseball team. That meant that number three quarterback, Lance Tucker (who could have been expected to get a lot of work for the Crimson, meaning Burgdorf would have had a lot more bench time) was switched to the White team.

And the Crimson came through with a 17-6 win. The Crimson had Offensive Coordinator Homer Smith as head coach, assisted by Mike Dubose, Danny Pearman and graduate assistants Chip Davis and Thad Turnipseed. Defensive Coordinator Bill Oliver was head coach of the White with assistants Woody McCorvey, Ivy Williams, Jeff Rouzie, Jim Fuller and graduate assistant Dabo Swinney.

Sophomore tailback Brian Steger gave the Crimson all the points that would be needed when he burst up the middle and outran everyone on a 54-yard scoring play. Matt Wethington kicked the extra point and added a 35-yard field goal late in the second quarter.

It was all Memphis in the scoring column in the second half. Redshirt freshman tailback Curtis Alexander of Memphis, kept under wraps most of the day, finally got his chance and was the main man in the White offense in the fourth quarter as he capped a seven-play, 42-yard drive with a four-yard run. And with just 1:38 to play, senior walk-on safety Danny Davis of Memphis picked off a Kitchens pass and went 70 yards for a score.

Steger was named winner of the Dixie Howell Award as the outstanding player in the game, while Crimson defensive end Damiean Jeffries was voted Dwight Stephenson Most Valuable Lineman. Both awards were voted by the press. Although Jeffries was not statistically the top defensive lineman, his presence was obviously disrupting the White offense.

It was a particularly disappointing day for White tailback Sherman Williams, who had 11 carries for a net of minus 7 yards, because Williams had had a good spring.

-Kirk McNair

## Crimson-White Individual Statistics

Crimson						
Rushing	Att.	Gain	Lost	Net	TD	LP
Steger	7	75	2	73	1	54
Vallery	7	46	1	45	0	16
Lynch	4	10	1	9	0	6
Burgdorf	8	17	16	1	0	11
Komisar	1	0	2	-2	0	-2
Goss	1	0	17	-17	0	-17
Totals	28	148	39	109	1	54

Passing	Att-Comp-Int	Yards	TD	LP
Burgdorf	9-5-0	63	0	21
Goss	1-1-0	15	0	15
Totals	10-6-0	78	0	21

Receiving	No.	Yards	TD	LP
Lynch	3	32	0	16
Key	1	21	0	21
Cassidy	1	15	0	15
Steger	1	10	0	10

Punting	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long
Diehl	4	171	42.8	52

Field Goals	Att.	Made	Long
Wethington	1	1	35
Watts	1	0	(59)

Punt Returns	No.	Yards	Long
Gibson	1	2	2

Interceptions	No.	Yards	Long
Davis	1	70	70
Staten	1	15	15

**Tackles (Primary-Assist, For Loss-Yards):**  
 Staten (7-1, 1-5), Gaston (5-0, 2-6), Blackburn (4-1, 1-9), Jeffries (2-1, 2-13), Buckner (2-1), F. Davis (2-1), Moore (2-0, 1-5), Watson (2-0), Shade (2-0), Tanks (2-0), Burton (2-0), Powell (1-1, 1-2), Ferbuson (1-1), Ranson (1-0, 1-4), Ray (1-0, 1-4), Ausmus (1-0, 1-3), D. Davis (1-0), Christian (1-0), Rogers (1-0), Gibson (1-0), Short (0-1).

**Passes Broken Up:**  
 Gaston 1, Blackburn 1, Shade 1, D. Davis 1

**Kicks Blocked:**  
 Moore 1 (field goal attempt)

White						
Rushing	Att.	Gain	Lost	Net	TD	LP
Alexander	5	27	0	27	1	16
Kitchens	4	33	9	24	0	22
T. Turner	3	6	2	4	0	4
Tucker	7	22	18	4	0	16
Williams	11	23	30	-7	0	2
Totals	30	111	59	52	1	22

Passing	Att-Comp-Int	Yards	TD	LP
Tucker	19-11-1	97	0	21
Kitchens	10-3-1	4	0	2
Totals	29-14-2	101	0	21

Receiving	No.	Yards	TD	LP
C. Brown	2	40	0	21
Williams	4	24	0	12
Malone	2	11	0	9
Alexander	2	10	0	6
T. Turner	2	8	0	5
West	1	4	0	4
Burroughs	1	4	0	4

Punting	No.	Yards	Avg.	Long
Stockton	4	124	31.0	35

Field Goals	Att.	Made	Long
Proctor	1	0	(40)

Fumble Returns	No.	Yards	Long
Robbins	1	30	30

**Tackles (Primary-Assist, For Loss-Yards):**  
 Walters (3-4, 2-2), Samuel (3-2), Walker (4-0, 3-28), Floyd (3-1), Fell (1-3), E. Brown (3-0, 2-5), Thompson (3-0), Thornton (2-0), T.P. Johnson (2-0), Reynolds (1-0), Pickett (1-0), Cole (1-0), S. Brown (1-0), T. Turner (1-0), Canale (0-1), E. Turner (0-1)

**Passes Broken Up:**  
 T.P. Johnson 1

**Fumbles Caused:**  
 Robbins 1

**Fumbles Recovered:**  
 Robbins 1, Fell 1



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# He'll Listen As Well As Teach

by Donald F. Staffo

Newest assistant football coach wants every player to have chance to succeed

Ivy Williams believes that coaching football is the same everywhere. However, that doesn't mean that being a football coach at The University of Alabama is the same as being a football coach somewhere else. Williams, who joined the Crimson Tide coaching staff in April, didn't take long to realize the importance of football at The Capstone.

The walls of Alabama's football building and Bryant Hall are covered with pictures of championship teams, All-America players and legendary coaches. The Paul Bryant Museum chronicles the rich tradition of Bama football.

And Williams also learned an Alabama coach doesn't wear an orange shirt, as he did his first day on the job. A quick trip to the football equipment room remedied that problem.

"Impressive; pretty impressive," Williams said of his introduction to Alabama football. "But you've got to understand that there is no comparison between Alabama and Texas Tech." Williams joined the Bama staff this spring from Texas Tech, where he had coached wide receivers. He is coaching running backs at Alabama. Ironically, he replaced Larry Kirksey, who is now coaching wide receivers for San Francisco of the National Football League.

"Alabama football is every-

thing I was told it would be, and more," Williams said. "I'm glad to be here. And I can tell that the players here are a lot better than the players we had at Texas Tech."

Williams has been coaching for 21 years, including a stint in the NFL, but really wanted a chance to coach at Alabama. During his career he has coached running backs and wide receivers. He is friends with Kirksey and Alabama Assistant Head Coach Woody McCorvey and also coached with John Paul Young, a former assistant under Gene Stallings at Texas A&M. Williams used all of those contacts to gain an interview with Stallings.

"I knew there was going to be an opening at Alabama and I contacted Woody and let him know that I was interested in being considered," Williams said. "I wanted the job. I was attracted to the school. It was a great opportunity to even be considered, because not many people can say they've had the opportunity to coach at an institution with the great tradition of Alabama. I also have a lot of respect for Coach Young and for Woody and Larry, and they all had a lot of great things to say about Coach Stallings."

Stallings said he also heard a lot of good things about Williams, and the two got together in

Dallas during Alabama's spring break. Over 200 applicants went after the opening at Alabama and a large number were interviewed. But after meeting with Williams, Stallings knew he had his man.

Stallings said, "He's got a master's degree in counseling, and I thought that's a real plus in this day and time. We've got a good deal of communicating to do with the players. Everybody wants to talk all the time, but people have to listen more to what other people are saying. If other people would do that, we'd have less problems. Being able to communicate is very important."

"He's a quality person who fits right in. Some people I had worked with who had worked with him spoke very highly of him, and said he'd be a good person to have on the staff. And he's got a good reputation as a hard-nosed football coach."

Williams said there was no discussion of offensive philosophy. "Coach Stallings just wants all of the players to work as hard as they can to be as good as they can as athletes and students," he said.

Williams has had a full spring. He went through all of Texas Tech's spring training before joining the Alabama staff for the second half of spring drills.

The addition of Williams enabled Randy Ross, who had been working with running backs after Kirksey's departure, to concentrate on his primary role on the staff, that of recruiting coordinator. Alabama's staff has been reduced by one (as mandated by the NCAA this year) with

Ellis Johnson, the coach of outside linebackers, having left for Clemson at the end of last season. However, with Alabama now primarily in a 4-3 defensive set, all three linebackers are coached by Jeff Rouzie, who formerly coached just the two inside linebackers.

Williams is a native of Fort Pierce, Florida, as is his wife, Barbara, and he said that wanting to be back in the South played a part in him seeking the Alabama job. They are parents of three children, Blair (10), Wendell (9) and Courtney (6).

Williams is a former star runner and receiver at Xavier of Ohio (where he earned both bachelor's and master's degrees). He led his team in scoring and pass receiving his last two seasons and was the 1971 Xavier captain.

After a year as a graduate assistant at his alma mater and a year of being a high school coach, he has coached running backs at Marshall, Kansas State, Kansas, Arizona State and for the Detroit Lions of the NFL. (Ironically, when Williams left Kansas for Arizona State, his position was filled by Larry Kirksey.) Williams has coached receivers at New Mexico State, Akron and Texas Tech. At Texas Tech his receivers ranked second in the Southwest Conference in 1991, 1992 and 1993. Last year his receivers caught 216 passes for 2,894 yards and 21 touchdowns.

The combination of having coached both running backs and receivers could be a good



one for Williams and the Tide. Bama Offensive Coordinator Homer Smith makes good use of the running backs as pass receivers. "We have great running backs here with great pass catching skills who are good route-runners, and I hope we throw to them," Williams said. "In football today, if you want to be a good running back you've got to be able to do both—run and catch—and I think we've got that here."

The newest Bama staffer knows something about good players. While at Arizona State he coached Gerald Riggs, who went on to play for the Washington Redskins, and Gerald Clack, a second-round draft pick of the Dallas Cowboys. Last year he coached Byron "Bam" Morris, a junior who has made himself eligible for this year's NFL draft.

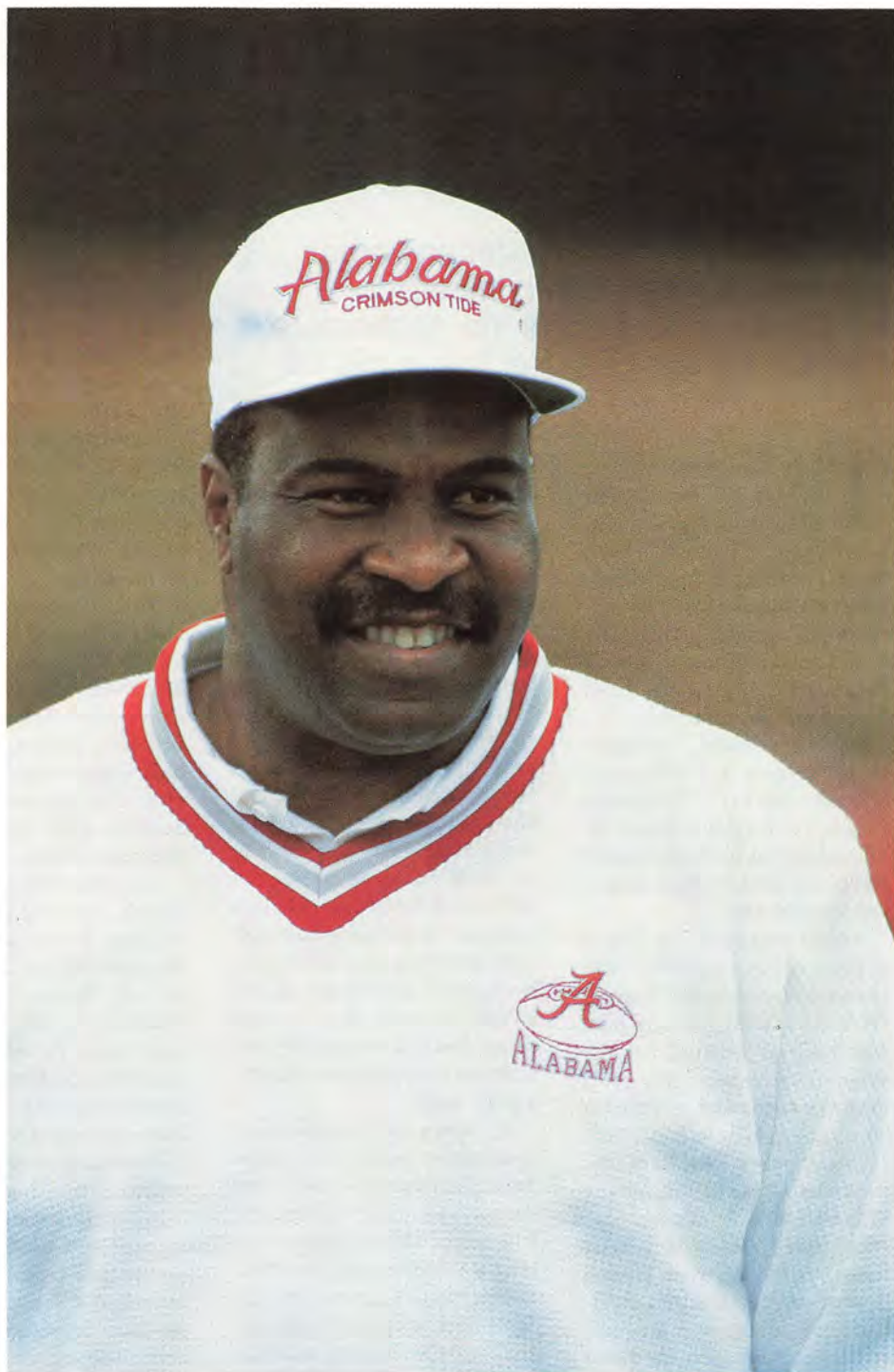
**W**ith the Tide, Williams is working with proven performers Sherman Williams and Tarrant Lynch, and some other potentially outstanding runners such as Brian Steger, Curtis Alexander, Dameian Vallery, Taurus Turner and Marcus Moring. In the fall he'll have two blue chip freshmen, Dennis Riddle and Kenneth Scissum, coming in.

The 45-year-old Williams, who aspires to a head coaching position, is coaching Bama backs the same way he has coached in both college and in the NFL. "Some coaches say you can teach more in college than you can in the pros, but sometimes those college guys are set in their ways, too," Williams said. "I personally think it's a communication thing. Listen to any college football player for five minutes and you will know that all football players want to be successful. All I want to do is put them in a position to have success.

"If a player knows you can help him and understands you can help him, you've got his attention.

"Coaching college and professional football is basically the same, but I prefer college coaching because you get a guy full of potential and all you've got to do is shape it."

A college coach also has recruiting responsibilities. Williams said he expects to recruit in North Alabama and around Memphis to begin with, but that his terri-



Ivy Williams, a 21-year veteran of coaching at the college and professional level, is the newest member of the Alabama football coaching staff. Williams is working with Bama running backs.

Barry Fikes Photo

tory could change. In recent years the Tide has dipped into talent-rich Texas to land highly-recruited prep stars such as linebackers John Walters and Tyrell Buckner, wide receiver Rick Brown,

Vallery and incoming offensive lineman Chris Sign. Having recruited the Lone Star State for the past five years, Williams said, "If they want me to, it would be no problem for me to go back and recruit Texas."



# Linebacker Isn't Backing Down

by John Barnes

Although a returning starter and other talented players are in competition for the inside linebacker job, sophomore believes he can be in the lineup this fall

**T**hey say everything is bigger in Texas. For Alabama's Tyrell Buckner, himself a Lone Star state native, nothing is bigger than Alabama football. As he endures the rigors of spring practice, the sophomore-to-be is looking for big things from himself and his teammates.

Working at middle linebacker in the Tide's 4-3 defensive scheme, the 6-1, 245-pound Buckner is making a name for himself among more established players such as Michael Rogers and John Walters.

"Tyrell's situation is like that of so many of our other kids," said Linebackers Coach Jeff Rouzie. "He's a big strong young man with loads of potential, but like some of the others, he's got a long way to go as far as knowing what's going on in front of him."

One of only a handful of true freshmen to see action for the Tide in 1993, Buckner's play was limited mostly to special teams. He did see some playing time at outside linebacker, albeit minimal. He even drew the starting assignment in the Gator Bowl victory over North Carolina. Most importantly, he avoided the redshirt year—a pretty good indicator of the impression he made on Bama coaches during the early phases of fall practice.

Buckner appreciates the opportunity to prove himself on the field, but is far from satisfied with his play thus far. "For a freshman season, I guess I did

pretty well," said Buckner. "It's a pretty big adjustment. The reads and coverages are much more complicated than anything I dealt with in high school. It takes a while to learn. Overall, I am very happy to be here."

Rouzie believes Buckner is a legitimate star in the making. "Tyrell has as much talent as any freshman I've seen around here in a long time," he said. "It's just that he's a little raw and has to adjust to our schemes. He's having a very good spring. In Tyrell's defense, he missed our second scrimmage due to a math test he had to take. It may have hurt him just a little because it was our last day of full-contact work before spring break, but he's responded very well and performed well following the break."

If Alabama's first game were tomorrow, Buckner's fellow Texan John Walters could be the starter at middle linebacker, with senior Michael Rogers running a close second. However, Rouzie is quick to point out that September is a long time away and virtually anything can happen in the meantime. "I fully expect Tyrell to contend for the starting job," he said. "There is no doubt that John Walters was our most consistent player this spring. Michael has experience going for him and is a three-year letterman. But don't discount Tyrell. He has great physical strength and great speed for lateral pursuit and pass coverage. When he learns how to use his

physical tools, he'll be a very good football player."

**B**uckner's physical tools are well documented in Dennison, Texas, a small town near the Oklahoma border. A varsity starter in the ninth grade, Buckner's size and speed caught the eye of some of the nation's top programs. However, at the time, Alabama was not among them. After visits to Miami, Oklahoma and Southern Cal, it was Buckner himself who expressed an interest in Alabama.

The old Texas connections made years ago by Tide Head Coach Gene Stallings served Bama well with Tyrell Buckner. As with the recruitment of John Walters, a telephone call from a high school coach put Stallings and the Bama staff onto Buckner. Once the connection was made, it was a done deal.

"After my visit, (coupled with Bama's win over Miami in the '93 Sugar Bowl) I knew this was the place for me. I really didn't feel all that comfortable at Oklahoma or USC, and Miami's hot-dog style of play really didn't suit my personality. I really feel I made the right decision. I have no regrets whatsoever."

According to Rouzie, Bama's recent recruiting swing into Texas is just a matter of circumstance. "I'm not sure I would say we have launched a 'recruiting push' in the state of Texas," he said. "In two cases (Walters and Buckner) the players were brought to our attention."

Still, the numbers don't lie. Beginning with Rick Brown and continuing through Walters, Buckner, running back Damien Vallery and 1994 signee Chris Sign, Bama has signed some of the top players from the Lone Star state. That's quite an accomplishment for a program that rarely ventures outside a 250-mile radius of Tuscaloosa.

With the recent breakup of the Southwest Conference, the trend is likely to continue.

**T**he 4-3 defense is considered best against passing teams, the 3-4 best against option running teams. Since the rules have changed to encourage passing by the offense, Alabama this year appears likely to have the 4-3 as its basic defensive alignment. (Of course, with Bill Oliver as defensive coordinator, Alabama has been in the basic 3-4, the 4-3, the 5-1-5, and even the 11-0, and just about any other combination one could think of.)

Unfortunately for Buckner, the basic 3-4 had two inside linebackers, and those two positions have suddenly become one, making for an uphill climb into the starting lineup. Both Buckner and Rouzie feel he is up to the challenge.

"I've got a full season under my belt and I feel that I can push Michael and John for the starting job," said Buckner. "I got some good experience toward the end of last year and things are going well this spring. By the time that first game rolls around next fall, I think I'll be right there in the picture."

It was that late season experience that could very well propel Buckner into the starting lineup. Only minutes before Bama's game with North Carolina in the Gator Bowl, Buckner was informed he would be the starter at inside linebacker, along with Rogers and Darrell Blackburn (who has since been shifted to defensive end). The two spearheaded an impressive defensive performance against the potent Tarheel offense. "I was very surprised to be named the starter in that game," he said. "To be able to go in front of great players like John Walters and Mario Morris was



very rewarding. We played well. After going back and forth in the first half, we came out in the second half and dominated the game with a lot of young players on the field."

Few would argue that Bama's impressive victory over the Tarheels should go a long way in healing the Tide's late season woes. Both Rouzie and Buckner feel the win could be a stepping stone to a more positive and injury-free season in 1994. "Last year was like dominoes," said Buckner. "A few guys got hurt early on and by the end of the season it seemed that everyone was hurt. Somewhere along the line, we kind of lost our spirit. I really don't see that happening two years in a row. We'll be a young team, but I think by the end of next season we'll be a very good team."

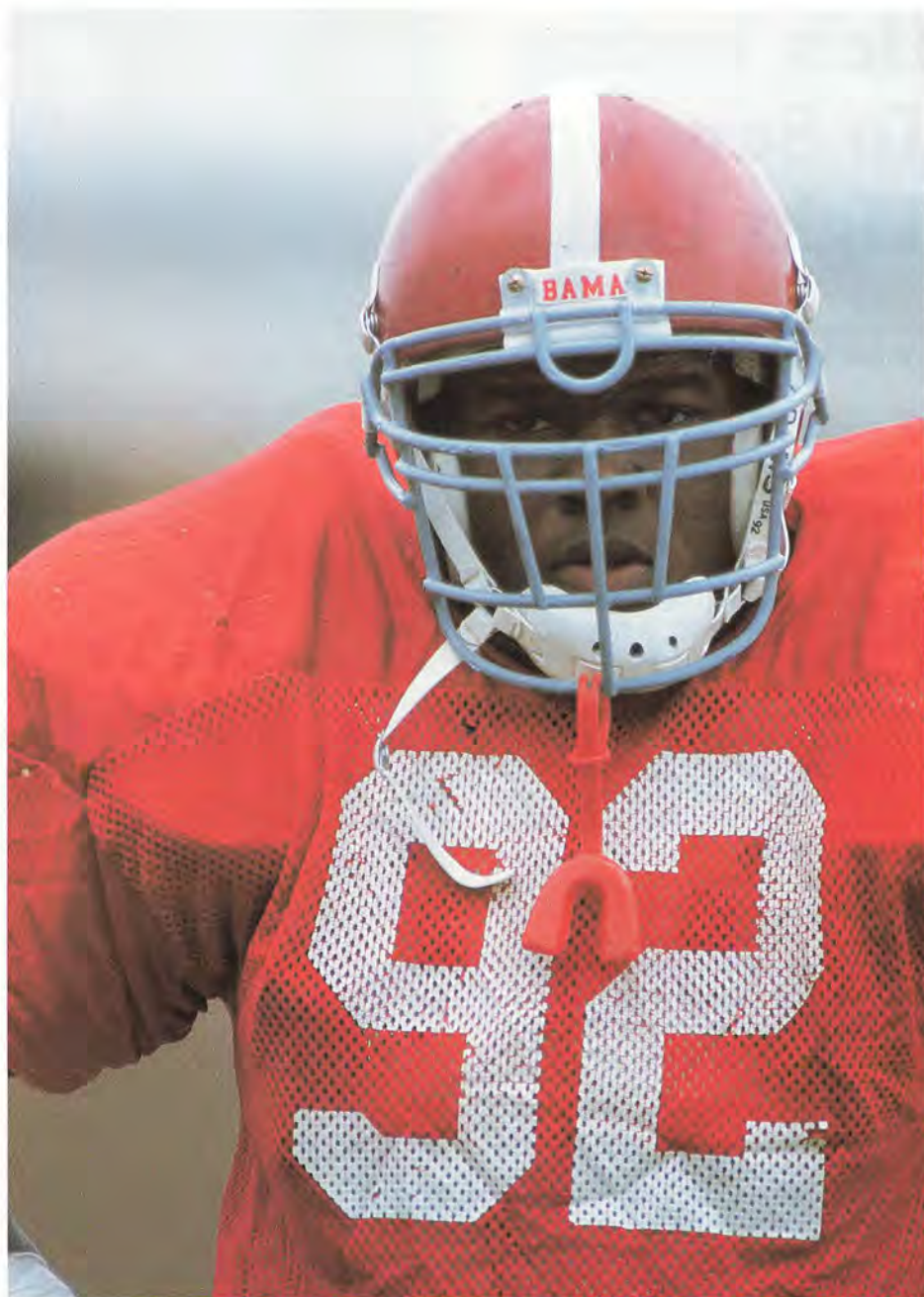
With the loss of defensive stalwarts Antonio Langham, Jeremy Nunley, James Gregory and Lemanski Hall, Buckner and his teammates will be stuck with the task of filling the gaps while learning new defensive schemes. "Our defense was impressive this spring," said Buckner. "We've got good speed and great pursuit, but we really won't know anything until we face some real game competition. In addition to myself, some of the other younger guys like Ralph Staten and Blair Canale have performed well. We've also got enough veterans in the lineup to keep us on an even keel."

**T**hroughout the years, the Bama linebacker corps has been one of the most consistent in college football. If Penn State is linebacker U, then Alabama is Southern Linebacker U. Buckner is determined to carry on the tradition. "You look at some of the great 'backers who have been at Alabama, guys who have made All-Pro and had hall of fame-type careers, I'm really honored to be here."

Whether or not Buckner will be mentioned in the same breath with names such as Lee Roy Jordan, Derrick Thomas, and Cornelius Bennett remains to be seen. One thing is certain; with only one inside linebacker, the opportunity will be there for Buckner to showcase his talents as a true middle linebacker.

Buckner is excited about the prospects. "Whoever plays the position will have a lot of added responsibilities," he said. "You've got to have great lateral pursuit to either side, not just the strong or weak side as before. You have to play smart, controlled football and never bite on a fake. I feel I have what it takes to do that. I think I'll be right there with John and Michael when fall rolls around."

Rouzie feels that playing smart football may be Buckner's best attribute. "For someone as young as he is, Tyrell is a very smart football



Sophomore middle linebacker Tyrell Buckner is looking for a starting job, despite the presence of some talented veterans at the one inside linebacker position available.

Barry Fikes Photo

player," said Rouzie. "When you consider all the different schemes and looks we throw at them, Tyrell did very well for a true freshman. Tyrell is a good student, a smart young man and it shows up on the football field as well as in the classroom."

As Buckner, Walters and Rogers learn their new position, Rouzie is quick to point out that although Walters has the immediate advantage, the best player will start in the Tide's opener against Tulane. "As I said, John is run-

ning first right now. We still have four months until two-a-days and anything can happen. If Tyrell doesn't start, he will certainly play. We will try to get him as many reps as we can between now and then. It's up to him what he does with the opportunity, but I think he'll make the most of it."

Tyrell Buckner is truly a man with a mission. If sheer determination is worth anything, he may become the linebacker of the future at Alabama.



Patrick Hape:

## He's Trying To Sew Up Tight End

by Kirk McNair

Tide sophomore stands out as a blocker, and is improving as receiver

**M**any Alabama athletes were multi-sport performers in high school, and Alabama sophomore football player Patrick Hape is no exception.

It may be that an eleventh grade basketball incident tells as much about Patrick Hape as anything. Hape caught an elbow to his cheek in a high school basketball game. Although he is a Business Management major, not a Pre-Med student, he recognized that the gash under his eye needed a few stitches. "I just didn't want to be seen in public with it looking so bad," Hape said. He went home, rummaged through his mother's sewing kit, and using her needle and thread put eight stitches in it. "It didn't hurt much, I think because I was so nervous," Hape said.

Later a doctor examined him. "He told me I had used the wrong kind of thread, but that I had done a good job," Hape said. "He took the stitches out and it stayed together. I've got a little scar, but no one seems to notice it."

Now Hape is trying to sew up a job as Alabama's tight end, and he has drawn plenty of notice from Tide coaches for his hard work on the practice field.

**H**ape knows where the blame falls if he doesn't catch passes this year. "If you run your routes right, the quarterback is going to hit the man who is open," Hape said. "So I've got to get open. If I'm not open, it's my fault."

Sophomore tight end Patrick Hape (38) was considered a prospect to play fullback, linebacker, tight end or a down line position on either offense or defense, but has ended up a top performer as a tight end. He is particularly noted for his blocking.

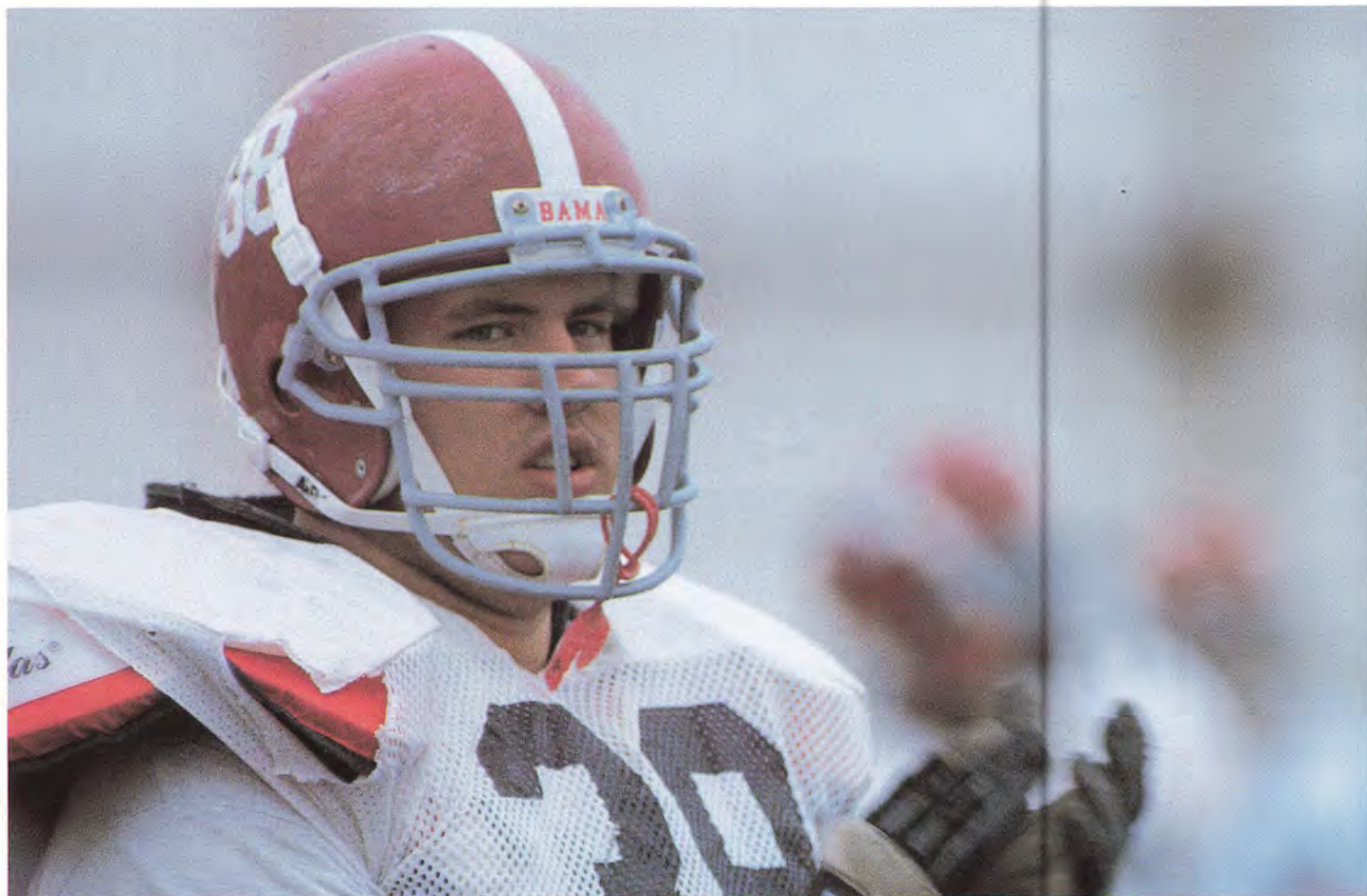
Barry Fikes Photo











Although tight end Patrick Hape is most-noted for his blocking ability, both he and his position coach, Woody McCorvey, expect him to excel as a receiver, too. Hape had a very good spring and will enter fall drills as co-number one with last year's starter, Tony Johnson.

Barry Fikes Photo

Hape, 6-5, 252, is a tight end with a reputation as a fine blocker, but not much fame yet as a pass receiver. As a true freshman he played in every Crimson Tide game, but caught only two passes.

Tight end is something of a hybrid position. The man there must block like a tackle on running plays and he has route-running and pass-catching responsibilities on pass plays. Many believe Bama has one tight end, Hape, who fits the offensive lineman mold, another tight end, Tony Johnson, who is the more dangerous receiver. The tight ends are coached by Woody McCorvey, Bama's receivers coach, and the tight ends meet with the wide receivers. However, Hape believes the position is "a little more like a tackle."

But he doesn't buy the Hape-the-blocker/Johnson-the-receiver observation. "I catch the ball good and block good and so does Tony," Hape said. "You've got to be able to do both, and both of us can. He's faster than I am, which may be why some people think of him more as a receiver." (Hape runs a 4.9 40-yard dash.)

"Patrick can be a good receiver, but he won't be the type receiver Tony is," McCorvey said. "Tony is faster and quicker and has a background as a receiver. We can split Tony out a little, but we won't do that with Patrick. But as a close-in tight end, he'll do a good job."

The two tight ends are competing for the starting job in 1994, but they are close friends. Last year Johnson was the starter and went into spring

drills as the number one tight end, but Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings frequently praised Hape's performance this spring and considers Hape to be at least equal with Johnson now. "We get along great," Hape said of his relationship with Johnson, an upcoming junior. "He's been here longer than I have and I've learned an awful lot from practicing with him. And Tony's a big Christian, someone I really look up to personally."

Hape has been coveted by a number of assistant coaches since coming to Alabama. He has been rumored as a possible linebacker, fullback, and even down lineman on either offense or defense. But for now it appears that his first position—tight end—is his position. "When I first came here

(in August last year) I didn't know where to go (when players were to go to individual position meetings)," Hape said. "Coach McCorvey came by and saw me standing out in the hall and said, 'You're going with me,' and I've been a tight end ever since. I'm too big to be a linebacker now."

Hape hopes to stay at tight end, but said, "I just want to play anywhere I can," Hape said. "I like tight end and I've been playing pretty well there. But I'll play anywhere I can help the team."

Hape doesn't believe the tight end responsibilities have changed a great deal with Homer Smith returning to Alabama as offensive coordinator. In Smith's previous tenure at Bama (1988-89), the tight ends and fullbacks were much-



used receivers. In 1988, six of the top receivers were backs and tight ends. In 1989, the top three receivers were backs and tight ends.

But, Hape said, "We're doing about the same things we were last year. A few things have changed, but overall it's about the same. Plays have different names, but the assignments are basically the same. We may be used as receivers a little more than last year."

**H**ape may be considered the blocking tight end more so than the receiving tight end, but as he points out, "Last year I had three passes thrown to me and I caught two of them."

Last year Hape had an eight-yard catch against Arkansas (a game in which he saw action on 39 plays) and a 16-yard grab against Louisiana Tech (when he played a season-high 42 plays). The reception against Louisiana Tech was notable as the pass was thrown behind Hape and he made a neat one-handed grab of the ball. But, he said, "I didn't do much to be pleased about. That good catch I made wasn't against a big-time team."

The one pass he didn't catch was notable, too, because it was caught by someone—a Southern Miss defender. "The pass was a little low and I batted it up in the air," Hape said. "It was a bad play on my part because I tried to run with the ball before I caught it. Then when I batted it up, I was trying to go for it, but I got hit and they intercepted it."

While most of Hape's action in 1993 came as the back-up to Johnson, he also played in double tight end situations, ordinarily short-yardage plays where a tight end replaces a split end for blocking purposes. He was also a member of several special teams.

Hape admitted that, "I had the jitters real bad as a freshman. The first time I went in to block, I got knocked down;



Patrick Hape

well, I didn't actually get knocked down, but I might as well have. I didn't do my job."

**H**ape's football philosophy is based in part on something his high school coach, Mike Willis, once said. "He told me that no one is ever too good to not pick up a penny," Hape said. "And no one is ever too good that he can't learn something new. And I need to work hard on every part of my game."

One of the most difficult jobs for a receiver is to read the opposing defense, and Hape said that he spends a lot of time studying that. "We have quite a few deep routes for the tight end based on the (defensive) coverage," he said. "That's where it's really important."

The upcoming sophomore said that one advantage offensive players have in spring training is working against the Alabama defense. "They're rough on every play every day," Hape said of his defensive mates. "They've got their stuff together, and that's what we've got to do on offense."

Although Hape admits that, like anyone playing football at the level Alabama plays it, he would like one day to have a chance to play professional football, he knows that opportunity is several years away. For now, he said, "I don't have any personal goals. My goal is for us to win in everything we do."

He's gotten a little bigger and a little faster and stronger since



Woody McCorvey

coming to Alabama. "I worked pretty hard in the off-season," he said. "And I'll be here about half the summer. I'm going to work about half the summer so I'll have a little money."

He also works hard in the classroom and said that he enjoys school. But he admits it's not all self-motivation. "Coach McCorvey stays on us pretty good to get our schoolwork done," he said.

McCorvey said that Hape is a hard worker who makes improvement every day. "Coach Stallings is looking for two things on offense: a tight end who can block and a fullback who can block. Patrick can block. He's the best we've got; in fact, going into his sophomore year, he does things better in blocking than anyone we've had here."

"His best asset is his effort. Even if a defender slips off him, he'll keep after him and get back into position to make the block. He also has great quickness and strength."

**I**t wasn't a tough job for Alabama coaches to recruit Hape. He was a life-long Crimson Tide fan. Or, at least, most of his life. "I went through a little stage when I decided that since everyone in my family was an Alabama fan, that I should be an Auburn fan," he confessed. "But I didn't have my heart in it."

Prior to his senior year in high school he had seen only one Alabama game in person, but it was a big one—Alabama's

28-10 win over Notre Dame in Birmingham in 1986. As a senior he made a number of unofficial visits to Bama games and to games at other schools. But he made only one official visit: to Tuscaloosa.

"It wasn't a big mystery about where I was going to go," he said. "I told the coaches early that I would sign with Alabama." Will Friend, an offensive lineman from Philadelphia, Mississippi, was the first high school player to publicly commit to Alabama prior to the 1993 signing day, and Hape was the second.

He then cancelled official recruiting trips to LSU, Tennessee, Auburn and Mississippi State.

Hape was listed by some as a fullback and by some as a linebacker, as well as a tight end, as he made all of the national and regional recruiting lists. He was named a high school All-America and ranked the third best tight end prospect in the nation by *Superprep*. He was a four-year starter as a tight end and linebacker for Coach Tim Yeager at Brooks High School in Killen and was ranked among the state's top ten prospects by virtually every publication and recruiting service. As a junior he had played enough fullback to rush for over 600 yards and seven touchdowns.

"I really think Patrick's background as a fullback and tight end gave him a lot of his toughness," McCorvey said.

He was also a track and field performer (shot put and discus), a baseball player and, of course, a basketball center for his high school team. While he said he'd love to do what his roommate, Freddie Kitchens, does, and play baseball as well as football, a shoulder injury makes it too hard for him to throw a baseball now.

But no one doubts Patrick Hape is playing the right spot. He should be a solid performer for Bama for the next three years.



# Men's Golf Team Home-Grown

by Donna Fromme

Tide Coach Dick Spybey had hoped to be able to add some top local prep players

In the city where football is king, it may come as a surprise that also lurking in the backyard is a crown prince: golf.

University of Alabama Golf Coach Dick Spybey made that discovery early into his own coaching reign, and the wealth of talent he's found in his own backyard has helped bring Alabama golf the riches it enjoys as a collegiate national power.

"One of my goals when taking over," said Spybey, "was to try to do a better job of keeping the Alabama kids in state and certainly the Tuscaloosa kids here at home. As

the former director of the Tuscaloosa Junior Golf Tour, I was obviously aware of our young talent in town and had hoped we could use some of that in future years. As it turned out, that's become the case."

One school alone, Tuscaloosa Academy, has turned into a feeder school for the Tide golf program. And no wonder. In the last five years, Tuscaloosa Academy has produced two United States Amateur qualifiers and a Future Masters champion. One of its famous golfing sons, Dicky Pride, collected his PGA card last Fall. His credentials in-

clude a trip to the semifinals at the Amateur, qualifying for the 1992 United States Open, being named second team All-Southeastern Conference in 1992, and, lettering for four seasons on the Alabama golf team.

"It's a surprise that a small, private school such as TA has produced four golfers who could play at this level," Spybey said. "It's a tribute to the junior golf programs in town and the golf boom in general that's helped these youngsters get introduced to this game. We've been lucky to have four fine student-athletes from TA play for us, but at



The Alabama golf team's current Tuscaloosa connection includes Joe Patton (left) and Mayson Petty, both products of the city's junior program.

Barry Fikes Photo





Dick Spybey

the same time, youngsters in Tuscaloosa have to understand, their success did not come overnight. They've all dedicated themselves to golf and continue to dedicate themselves each day they are here. I continue to advise junior golfers here to get out and enter the bigger tournaments, national events, and compete and work hard—like these kids did."

Spybey's words are food for thought. Two of the four, Pride and Scott Taylor, came to Alabama as walk-ons and earned scholarships, while Mayson Petty and Joe Patton, both nationally lauded, signed during the early signing periods their senior seasons. It is Pride's success that Spybey uses as inspiration for his players.

"Certainly Dicky Pride is the big surprise of our program," Spybey said. "At first he wasn't totally sure of what he wanted to do in college. There are a lot of social activities at The University, and his father had gone here and he was following in his footsteps in different areas. It wasn't until his junior year that he decided he wanted to play at this level. And he has dedicated himself since, and is very fortunate now to be on the PGA tour.

"All coaches use this type of example to help them in their teaching. It's a great lesson to our non-scholarship athletes that you don't have to be the full-scholarship guy to be the star. In golf, it's the player out there by himself. If you dedicate yourself, many times you can reap the rewards."

Alabama's 1994 squad to which Spybey makes his speech includes three of Tuscaloosa Academy Coach Tom Tarleton's former charges. The oldest is

senior Scott Taylor who has been teammates to both Pride and Tide sophomore Mayson Petty. Taylor made his mark in high school, medaling in the region for three consecutive years and earning team MVP honors in 1988 and 1989. But when it came time to choose a college, Spybey wasn't ready to offer Taylor a scholarship.

"I wanted to come here first," said Taylor whose Alabama credits include trips to the NCAA Championships, "but coach wouldn't give me a scholarship. So I took off to Samford for a year, and all the while I knew I wanted to come here. I came back and knew I'd have to walk on to do it, but I did learn. Dicky and David (Kirkpatrick) were both examples to me of what walk-ons could do. David came as a walkon and turned out to be an All-America—on the same level as Jerry Pate, the greatest golfer to ever play here. It's an example that some people take longer to develop their games than other people.

"Mayson was opposite from Dicky and me when he came here. Mayson was an All-America, AJGA, all those things. I guess Dicky and I both knew we wanted to play here no matter what it took. It took us longer to get where we are now than guys like Mayson, who did really well in junior golf. But the fact that Dicky and David did it showed me it could be done."

For Petty, the collegiate golf world was his oyster. He'd finished seventh at the 1992 Rolex Tournament of Champions and placed fifth (tying with his future Alabama teammate and roommate Patrick Vadden of Louisville, Kentucky) at the 1992 Future Masters. And the temptation was strong to go elsewhere to college to play golf.

"I thought I really wanted to go off somewhere to play until I went on my visits," Petty said. "I'd always heard about these other places and how much better they were than The University, but when I made my visits I realized Alabama was right up there with all of them. At Alabama, I liked the whole school, the people in general. Plus, I knew Coach Spybey and all the guys on the team from living here. And that's what kept me here."

When the sophomore joined the Tide team last year, he joined another Tuscaloosan, Jeff Street, who prepped at Central High School and was a senior on last year's Bama team. "I grew up playing with Jeff," said Petty. "And, really, I had been playing with all of the others on the team who are from Tuscaloosa. When I first started playing at Alabama, it



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was kind of like we were in high school again. That was probably an advantage for all of us."

Petty uses his hometown connections to keep up with one of his fellow Tuscaloosa Academy alumni, Pride. Petty, too, is toying with the idea of pursuing a professional golf career after college. "I'd like to play, but I've got to get a lot more serious about it," he said. "I watch Dicky every chance I get. He worked real hard and showed what hard work can do."

For Patton it has been a case of hurry up and wait. His talent sailed him into the University on a scholarship. But, even though the 1992 Alabama PGA Junior champion is a gifted player, Spybey, who was armed with depth this year, decided to red-shirt Patton his first season.

Patton's pre-Alabama credentials include placing sixth at the 1991 Future Masters national tournament in play that was highlighted by a round where he shot a 68.

But the choice was always clear to him where Patton would continue his golf career. "I grew up an Alabama fan, so I've always wanted to play here," he said. "I'm looking forward to spending the next four years making Alabama's golf team its next national champion. This has been a rising program, and I want to help put it on the top."

Meanwhile, as they help the Tide's golf team continue its national prominence—it has advanced to the elite field of the NCAA Championships the past two seasons and is on its way to a third appearance in Dallas in June—Tuscaloosa's "Backyard Boys" will continue the fun that comes along with playing for the hometown team.

"As you look at the tournament-by-tournament breakdown," notes Spybey, "you see

that Dicky Pride was a top five performer during his final two years, and you see that Mayson Petty and Scott Taylor have done the same. And it's our hope that when he plays, Joe Patton will do the same. It's been a nice thing for this community to be able to follow their kids. And it's certainly helped our program prosper from a community standpoint."

For Taylor, playing for the hometown team has been worth every step he took to get this far in his successful career.

"We had a really good junior program when we were growing up," said Taylor, "so that gave us a good foundation. It exposed us to good instruction. And I grew up playing at NorthRiver, which at the time may have had the best professional staff in the country. There were four pros there who were on the *Golf Digest* teaching staff, and they never hesitated to go out and give us a lesson whenever we wanted. One of those is Mark Wood, who Mayson and I still get help from."

"Just knowing a lot of people in Tuscaloosa makes it fun. They always keep an eye on how you are doing. Coming from the same town that you go to school to might add a little extra pressure, but I think we all handle it very well. We've been able to perform in a way that makes them proud of us and proud of the school at the same time. I have no regrets about staying in Tuscaloosa and going to Alabama. The only thing I'd have changed was to start here instead of Samford, even if it meant walking on. It's definitely been a lot of fun. There aren't that many people who grow up in a college town who get to go on and compete on an athletic team, not at this level. It's kind of surprising a school of that size (Tuscaloosa Academy) could continually put out the level of golfer it takes to play for a team like Alabama, a Division I Top 20 school. It says a lot for Tuscaloosa."

## One To Take Pride In

Tuscaloosa native Dicky Pride is currently living the golfer's dream.

Pride, who lettered at Alabama from 1989-92, changed his homebase from his native Tuscaloosa to Orlando to chase his dream of playing professional golf.

His dream came true when he earned his PGA card in November. Pride has played a predominant PGA tour schedule since that time. He has also entered a few of the Nike events. So far his best finish at a PGA Tour event was at the Nestle's Bay Hill Classic in Orlando where he earned over \$3,100. His best finish in the Nike event was at the Nike Pensacola Open where he finished at seven under par.

"Although Dicky has missed few of the 36 hole cuts, he's gained so much valuable experience," says Crimson Tide Coach Dick Spybey. "And I look for him to have a better second half of the year."

Pride embarked on his profes-

sional career as soon as he graduated from Alabama—fresh from taking the Tide to its first NCAA tournament appearance in nearly a decade in 1992. He won three Tommy Armour Tour events last year. His has been the story that inspirations are made. He came to Alabama as a walk-on and, a week after his last tournament at Alabama (NCAA Championships), Pride was playing in the U.S. Open.

"Dicky has been an inspiration to all of us as he has shown what the true student-athlete is capable of doing," says Spybey. "He never cut corners in his academic areas, and I feel that probably had a lot to do with his success out in the real world and now on the Tour."

"It's been a thrill for me to keep up with Dicky's progress and relay it to the team. He and I talk at least once a month, and his father (former Tide coach Dick Pride) and I talk more frequently so I can stay current. It's now been a good breeding ground for our other guys who have set their goals on making the tour because now their friend has done that and they see that it can be done."

Pride said that while he naturally prefers playing on the more prestigious PGA tour than on the Nike tour, that in some ways he's more comfortable on the minor circuit. "It's kind of hard to walk up to someone like Tom Watson and ask for a game (practice round)," Dickey said.

Upcoming PGA events in which Pride is scheduled to play are: The Houston Open, April 28-May 1; the Atlanta Classic, May 5-8; the Dallas Byron Nelson, May 12-15; the Kemper Open, June 2-5; and the Buick Classic, June 9-12. He'll also attempt to qualify for the United States Open on May 23 at Pine Tree in Birmingham. The Open is June 16-19 at Oakmont in Pennsylvania.

—Donna Fromme





# Tide Has Another Strong Finish

by Kirk McNair

A second straight second place finish in the NCAA Championships is remarkable for young Tide team

The Alabama women's winter sports programs have had unprecedented national success this year. The Crimson Tide women's basketball team of Coach Rick Moody reached the Final Four. The Bama women's swimming and diving team of Coach Jonty Skinner finished ninth in the nation. And the women's track and field team of Coach Doug Williamson finished second in the NCAA Championships.

From an attendance standpoint and based on the criteria of continuing success, there is no doubt that Alabama's top women's sport is gymnastics. And the Crimson Tide of Coach Sarah Patterson had another exceptional season. A typical strong finish—Bama at its best at tournament time—included Bama's second straight national runner-up finish.

Alabama, which has won two national championships in Patterson's 16 years as head coach, is the only team in the nation to finish no worse than fourth in 10 straight national meets.

Alabama did all it could do to win the national championship, but there are elements in gymnastics that are not in other sports. A touchdown in football is six points, regardless of how stylish it is or isn't. Gymnastics is judged by humans, and subjective scoring is not always consistent. Additionally, the national championship meet was held on the floor of Utah before 11,000 partisan fans. While Patterson said the crowd did not affect Alabama, only gave assistance to Utah, there is always the suspicion of judges (as basketball referees) getting caught up in the fervor of the home crowd. Additionally, Utah got a break on the rotation, finishing with floor exercise. The final result was the narrowest of victories for the Utes, 196.4-196.35.

Alabama had earned the number one seed in the championship meet with a school record 196.9 in the Central Regional and followed that with a 196.3, the top score in the qualifying round at the NCAA meet.

"They did everything they had to do for two nights," said Patterson of her team. "We

were the only team that didn't count a break. It's hard to justify what happened.

"I thought we had our best overall performance. If you had told me we would perform like this and wouldn't win the national championship, I would have said you were crazy.

"The hardest thing was to look those young ladies in the eye and tell them they lost. I wish we had tied. Neither team deserved to be a loser."

Bama scored 48.95 on beam, 49.0 on floor and 49.05 on vault and was third (behind Georgia and Utah) with one event to go.

On uneven bars, Bama turned in a clutch performance, 49.35. Utah, needing 49.2 on floor exercise to tie Alabama, got 5/100 of a point more than that for the margin of victory.

"I haven't seen six beam routines and six bar routines of that caliber in two years at The University," Patterson said of her team's effort. "As a coach, you ask your athletes to lay it on the line. And that's what this team did. They did all I asked and more."

The Alabama coach said her team "came further than any team I've ever coached from our starting point to the ending point. We were using eight scholarship athletes, so we were two short. Kara Stilp missed five meets (with injury) and came back better than ever. Sheryl Dundas performed better than she ever has, and it was her last year in gymnastics."

Alabama performers earning All-America were sophomore Kim Kelly on uneven bars, vault and floor exercise, sophomore Chasity Junkin on vault and in all-around, senior Kara Stilp on bars, and freshman Meredith Willard on floor exercise and in all-around.

In individual competition, which is held on the third night of the championships, after the team competition, Junkin and Kelly tied for sixth on vault, Kelly was second on floor exercise (scoring a career-best 9.975) with Willard 10th, and Kelly was fourth and Stilp fifth on uneven bars.

Junkin will be the only senior on the 1995 Alabama team.



Kara Stilp



Chasity Junkin



Kim Kelly



Meredith Willard



# Pace Slow In Spring Signings

by Kirk McNair  
and Donna Fromme

**Men's basketball still hopes to have at least one additional signee**

**M**ore followers of college athletics are interested in football recruiting than the recruiting for other sports, and those who follow football recruiting are aware that the much-publicized battles for high school and junior college stars usually end with pre-signing day commitments and signings on the first day those signings are allowed.

That's not the way it is in other sports.

Partly, it's because winter and spring sports have a one-week early signing period in November in which some or all recruiting is completed. Partly, it's because there is less attention on signings in sports other than football by recruiting publications, and so the signings aren't known until the scholarship papers are returned to the college. Partly, it's because many prospects for the spring signing period don't make official recruiting visits until after the recruiting period (April 13-May 15). Prospects may make official visits to campus throughout the signing period. Although Alabama men's basketball did not have any prospects on official visits for A-Day weekend, prospects were scheduled for visits to Alabama through at least the first weekend in May.

Alabama Head Men's Basketball Coach David Hobbs signed one player in the early signing period, point guard Marco Whitfield, who is from Decatur, but who completed junior college at Central Florida in Ocala. He was all-state and all-conference and received All-America mention.

There is reason to believe that Alabama will have an additional men's basketball signee in this spring period, but it will be later rather than early. There is a possibility the Tide will not add a high school or junior college player in the early period. There are rumors of several major college players interested in transferring to Alabama. The draw of Alabama is that next season the Tide lineup appears to be set, but after a transfer

redshirt year, there are going to be plenty of positions open at Bama.

During the early signing period forward Chris Davis of Pensacola (Florida) Junior College committed to Alabama, but reports now are that Davis did not complete his junior college academic work and will not be eligible to sign.

Bama is still looking at Roy Hairston, a 6-8, 210-pound power forward at Hutchinson Junior College in Kansas, but plenty of other teams are looking at Hairston, too, since he led his team to the national junior college championship and was named most valuable player of the tournament. He is said to be leaning to South Carolina, and visited the Gamecocks and Purdue before visiting Tuscaloosa the weekend of April 23. He is also said to be considering a visit to Pittsburgh.

Hairston led Hutchinson to a 35-4 record as he averaged 22.6 points and 9.0 rebounds per game, shot 56 per cent from the field and 65 per cent from the free throw line and blocked 71 shots for Coach Steve McClain. The third team All-America was the only junior college player selected for the 1993

### Prep Football Visitors

There were a large number of upcoming high school senior football players on hand for Alabama's A-Day Game. Among those spotted who could be top prospects next fall and winter are:

Barrett Askew, linebacker, Lanett; Shawn Alexander, lineman, Quinton West Jefferson; Terry Carter, defensive lineman, Memphis Whitehaven; David Coppean, offensive lineman, Murfreesboro, Tennessee; Riverdale; Tawaski Dunigan, defensive lineman, Coffeeville; Michael Feagin, defensive back, Greenville; Damon Harrington, defensive back, Elkton, Maryland; Jason Harris, defensive back, Memphis Whitehaven; Steven Herndon, offensive lineman, LaGrange, Georgia; Troup County; Eugene Holt, defensive back, Elkmont; Damian Jackson, linebacker, Midfield; Jeno James, offensive lineman, Montgomery Sidney Lanier; Steven Kelly, running back, Enterprise; Michael Moore, lineman, Fayette County; Steve Stanley, quarterback, Leighton Colbert County; Blake Swindle, quarterback, Ridge Crest, Arkansas; Robert Tolbert, wide receiver, Memphis Whitehaven; and Michael Whitton, quarterback, Homewood.

Olympic Festival. An assistant coach at Hutchinson is former Bama basketball player Darby Rich.

Alabama is also said to be involved with guard Andre Burke of Hargrove Military Academy in Chatham, Virginia, who is also said to be considering Massachusetts and Tulane. He was scheduled to visit Alabama the weekend of April 30.

One of the most interesting basketball recruiting rumors was a report from Pennsylvania that a 6-3 point guard, an exchange student from Europe playing at Solanco High School in Quarryville, was interested in the Tide. If that sounds familiar, it's because that is the same school where Alabama was so involved in last year's early recruiting period, trying to get guard Johnny Miller. Miller was reportedly leaning to Alabama, but signed with Temple.

There have also been on-going reports the Tide might be involved with guard Chris Snowden, 6-3, of Waterproof, Louisiana, although there have also been reports that Snowden will sign a football scholarship at Southwestern Louisiana or go to junior college.

Some others who had been reported as possible Alabama men's basketball signees have either signed elsewhere or are no longer considered to be involved with Bama. They include forward Antonio Jackson of Aliceville, guard Reggie Poole of Shreveport, Louisiana, forward Jerod Ward of Clinton, Mississippi, guard Jerry Nichols of Jackson, Mississippi, and guard Kareem Reid of New York.

**T**ide Women's Basketball Coach Rick Moody signed four new players in the early signing period, and Bama women's basketball recruiting for this year is over. Pam Duncan, a 6-0 forward from Carrollton, was one of those early signees and she is the Alabama Sports Writers Association's choice for "Miss Basketball" in the state as she led her team to back-to-back state championships and broke the all-time career scoring mark for the state tournament. She scored over 2,600 points and was twice named the state tournament's most valuable player.

Other in-state signees are all-state performers Kidada Holtzclaw of Sylacauga and LaToya Caudle of Madison.

Moody also went into talent-rich Tennessee to sign Brittney Ezell, a 5-6 guard from Franklin who was all-state and all-state tournament.



There were also early signees announced in men's and women's tennis, men's and women's golf, gymnastics, and women's swimming. Some or all of those sports may add signees in the spring period, but none have yet been announced by Alabama.

Women's volleyball, a fall sport, has the same signing date as football, and new Tiders were announced previously.

**S**wimming Coach Jonty Skinner has announced a spring signing for the men's team. John Potts of Delray Beach, Florida, was a six-time All-America and the 1993 state champion in the 100 breast-stroke. He holds the St. Andrew's School record in four events and was undefeated in dual meet competition. He is also an honor student. He was the area swimmer of the year.

Track and Field Coach Doug Williamson has one new signee for the women's team. Jessica Fry of Spokane, Washington, is a distance runner who was 1991 national cross country champion.

Baseball added four new players in the

early period, and even though Coach Barry Shollenberger is retiring after this season, Bama has added another baseball player this spring. Todd Turner is a shortstop and right-handed pitcher for American Christian Academy in Tuscaloosa. He batted .462 and had a pitching record of 8-0 with an earned run average of 0.39 as he turned in 85 strikeouts and only 20 walks in 53 innings.

**A**labama's newest sport, women's soccer, kicks off next fall and Coach Don Staley is having to build a team from scratch. There are 15 signees who will comprise the roster for the 1994 team. They are:

All-state midfielder Emily Ahnell of Owensboro (Kentucky) High, who led her team to consecutive state championships; halfback Laura Baylor of Vicksburg, Mississippi, an honor student and youth Olympian for three years; Cindy Blevins of Knoxville, Tennessee, an all-region and all-district performer; Sweeper-forward-halfback Sue Brown of Cedarbrook, New Jersey, prepper who has competed internationally;

Jennifer Carle, an all-state midfielder from Austin, Texas; Mindy Delman, who helped Marietta (Georgia) Walton High to three state championships; her teammate at Walton, Taylor Eubank, a striker who scored four goals in the 1993 title game and was Georgia player of the year as she scored a state record 33 goals as a senior; forward Jennifer Fukunaga, who has transferred to Bama from Radford, from whence came the new Tide coach; Kristen Gadilhe of Helena, who helped Pelham to the 1993 and 1994 state titles; Cari Higgins of Marietta (Georgia) Pope, who has regional competition experience; sweeper Nikki Kubiszyn, an all-district member of the four-time South Texas champions at Austin; her club soccer teammate, Amy Lerche of Dulles High in Meadows, Texas, who is an honor student; Nichole Lees, another member of the Marietta Walton powerhouse; Radford transfer Amy Pseja of Riverdale, New Jersey, who was a two-time prep All-America goalkeeper; and Angela Young, a forward/midfielder from Virginia Beach, Virginia, who was also a gymnastics prospect.

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# Despite Frustration, Goals Are High

by John Barnes

Sophomore shortstop hopes for good end to a bad baseball season

As the Alabama baseball team plods through one of its worst seasons in recent memory, a number of players, including sophomore shortstop Brett Taft, are starting to show some frustration. As if a 1-13 start in the Southeastern Conference weren't bad enough, it was announced on April 14 that Head Coach Barry Shollenberger would resign at the end of the 1994 season.

For Taft and his teammates, the frustration is tough to deal with, but there is always hope for improvement.

"It's been a difficult season, no doubt about that," said Taft. "We just can't seem to get over the hump offensively. Our pitching has been solid; good enough to win a lot of the games we lost. When a whole team is in a hitting slump, it really doesn't matter how good your pitching is. You can't get the job done when you can't score runs."

The mark of a champion is to never give up hope. The smooth-fielding Hueytown native believes the Tide can still salvage a respectable season and send Shollenberger out on a winning note. "We've still got three SEC series' left and anything is possible," said Taft. "I'm confident that the team will at some point break out of this hitting slump. If we can go ahead and do it quickly, we've got a chance to finish strong. There is no way we can win the SEC, but when you've played as bad as we have, a nice little winning streak at the end of the season would be nice."

Taft was among those Alabama players who worked hard to put a good end for the 1994 Alabama baseball season. He was instrumental in come-from-behind, ninth-inning victories over Alabama-Birmingham and Ole Miss, the latter halting a 12-game Crimson Tide losing skid in SEC games.

He knocked in the go-ahead run in the ninth in Oxford in the Alabama victory. That game marked a modest three-game hitting streak for Taft, but it was also a game in which he had multiple hits in five of six games.

"We were due," Taft said following the game. "We had lost 10 one-run games in a row, and now we have won two in a row. I knew it was only a matter of time before we would get a break or two."

The lack of success on the diamond is something very new to Taft. One of the top players to ever come out of Hueytown High School, Taft was recruited by a number of SEC schools, including Ole Miss, Mississippi State and Auburn.

At Hueytown, Taft was regarded as the top-hitting middle infielder in the state. As a senior, he led all 6A players in hitting and doubles, winning the class 6A batting title.

As a freshman at Alabama, Taft started 32 of Bama's 40 games, posting an impressive .930 fielding percentage. At the plate, he held his own, hitting .257 with 23 runs batted in. He homered in his first two college



There is reason for optimism in Alabama's baseball program in part because of the presence of good young players like sophomore shortstop Brett Taft. Taft is confident that better things are ahead for the Crimson Tide.

University of Alabama Photo by Kent Gidley

'BAMA, Inside The Crimson Tide/MAY '94



at-bats and later blasted a grand slam against Vanderbilt, leading Alabama to an 8-6 win over the Commodores.

Although Bama finished the 1993 season with a less-than-spectacular 27-25 record, Taft's solid play at the difficult position of shortstop was one of the bright spots in what could be called a very dismal season and one which signaled the beginning of the end for Shollenberger.

As Taft struggles with the pain and frustration common to all losing teams, he still sees some hope on the horizon for Alabama baseball. "We're still Alabama," he said, "We've still got some pride. We've got guys on this team I know can hit the ball better than they have been, myself included. There is a lot more talent out here than we've shown so far.

If we can't do it this year, we'll regroup and come back next year ready to play."

Next season, however, will be the Tide's first without Shollenberger at the helm since 1979.

Shollenberger's resignation, although shocking at the time, was not altogether unexpected to Taft. "I've been hearing, we've all been hearing the rumors since last year. I knew it was coming, but I'm still a little upset that it has come to this. Coach Shollenberger is a nice man, but I think he would be the first to admit that it's time for a change."

As to who he thinks will replace Shollenberger, Taft won't hazard a guess. "I have no way of knowing," he said. "I've heard about ten different names mentioned. I would hope Coach (Bobby) Pierce gets some consideration. He played at Alabama and he's

a good coach. Unfortunately, I have no say in the matter."

Whomever Hootie Ingram decides to hire as Bama's next head coach, it will be a huge adjustment for Taft and his teammates.

In the wake of Bama's last three sub-par seasons, it may be forgotten that historically Alabama remains the SEC's most successful program.

Taft looks forward to the day when Alabama will once again be one of the most feared names in college baseball.

"This school has the tradition and the potential to be one of the top programs in our league and even in the nation," said Taft. "With the right coach and the right type of players, I have no doubt that Alabama will be back on top someday. I hope I'm still here when we do it."

## Shollenberger Resigns As Baseball Coach

**T**he news could not have been considered startling. Nevertheless, it has been a long time since Alabama baseball has not included Barry Shollenberger, who announced his retirement at the end of this season. The announcement came on Thursday, April 14, with Alabama mired at 1-8 in the Southeastern Conference. And on Friday Shollenberger's team responded by dropping the first of a three-game series it would lose to Mississippi State.

Although there has been no indication as to when Alabama might name a successor to Shollenberger, several names have surfaced as possibilities. Among them are:

- Current Alabama Assistant Coach Bobby Pierce (who served as interim head coach for three games last year when Shollenberger's mother suffered a stroke). Pierce, who played for Shollenberger at Bama, is the team's hitting instructor and third base coach.

- Former Alabama star third baseman Butch Hobson, currently manager of the Boston Red Sox.

- Pat McMahon, head coach at Old Dominion for the past four years and former pitching coach and top assistant at Mississippi State.

- Rod Delmonico, head coach at Tennessee the past four years and former top assistant and recruiter at Florida State when Hootie Ingram was the athletics director at FSU.

- Steve Kitrell, longtime head coach at South Alabama.

A prepared statement from the 53-year-old Shollenberger said:

"For almost 30 years, I have had the rare opportunity to work in a profession that I have truly loved. Coaching baseball for the past 15 years here at Alabama has been the highlight of my playing and coaching career.

"There comes a time, however, when one begins to think about stepping out of one arena and into another, and for the past couple of years I have been contemplating a career change.



Barry Shollenberger

"I have decided that now is the right time and I am announcing my retirement from coaching at the conclusion of this season. I hope this will allow our players to relax and play baseball like they are capable.

"My fondest wish is that they will be able to make significant strides to recoup the utmost possible from this season."

Shollenberger, who earned his doctorate as a graduate assistant at Alabama under Hayden Riley, succeeded Riley as head coach in 1980. During the 1991 season Shollenberger became Alabama's all-time winningest coach when he surpassed the mark of 339 victories set by Tilden "Happy" Campbell in 25 seasons.

Through the Ole Miss series that ended April 24, Shollenberger had an all-time coaching record at Alabama of 482-324-1, 60 per cent winning. He also coached at Middle Georgia Junior College for one year (44-10 in

1976) and at Western Kentucky for three seasons (77-64-2, 1977-79).

Shollenberger had great success at Alabama, but not recently. The Crimson Tide has not made the NCAA Tournament since 1991 and has been a relative SEC doormat. This year Bama lost its first series ever to Tennessee in 43 series meetings as the Vols swept the Tide. And Ole Miss scored 18 runs against Alabama, the most the Rebels have ever scored against the Tide.

However, in Shollenberger's first 12 years Alabama won 40 games in four seasons and 30 games in six seasons. From 1981 through 1984 Alabama and Florida were the only SEC teams which qualified for the NCAA Tournament. In 1983, Alabama's finest season under Shollenberger, the Tide won the SEC championship and the NCAA regional championship and finished second to Texas in the College World Series. Shollenberger signee David Magadan won the Golden Spikes Award as the nation's top collegiate player that season and Shollenberger was named national, regional and SEC coach of the year. He was national runner-up for coach of the year in 1981 when the Tide went 41-15-1 and tied for the SEC Western Division title.

Before becoming a coach, Shollenberger, a native of Reading, Pennsylvania, was a right-handed pitcher in the minor league organizations of the Boston Red Sox and the Cincinnati Reds.

Athletics Director Hootie Ingram, who will select Shollenberger's replacement, also had a prepared statement, which said:

"Coach Shollenberger has been here a long time. And he has done an outstanding job. We hate to lose a coach of his ability and experience, but at the same time, we understand that circumstances do change.

"I am confident we can secure an excellent coach to continue Alabama's great baseball tradition."

-Kirk McNair



# BAMA SCORECARD

## State In Birmingham?

The Birmingham Football Foundation took a big hit this year when the Southeastern Conference took advantage of a technicality to move the SEC Football Championship Game from Birmingham to Atlanta. But the BFF isn't dead.

Jim Simmons, executive director of the foundation, confirmed that he is negotiating with Mississippi State Athletics Director Larry Templeton to make it financially worthwhile for the Bulldogs to move some home games from Starkville's Scott Field, which seats about 46,500, to Birmingham's Legion Field, which seats about 83,000. Those games are the Mississippi State-Auburn on October 8 and the Mississippi State-Alabama on November 12.

Simmons admitted that a brief chat with one of his former Alabama teammates didn't bring a warm response to the idea. That former Tide teammate is Mississippi State Head Coach Jackie Sherrill.

In past years Mississippi State has occasionally played a home game away from home, including in Birmingham.

## Basketball Awards

An unusual feature of this year's Tuscaloosa Tipoff Club banquet, in which awards are presented annually to Crimson Tide men's basketball players, is that Head Coach David Hobbs elected not to award a Most Valuable Player trophy. Hobbs said that he considered all 16 players most valuable.

Seniors Shon Peck-Love, Walter Pitts and walk-on Philip Pearson were singled out for senior leadership contributions with Peck-Love receiving the Captain's Plaque.

Peck-Love was also awarded the Hustle Award, while Walter Pitts was winner of the Guy Lee Turner Memorial Defensive Award. The Rebounding Award went to freshman Antonio McDyeess.

Wade Kaiser, an Academic All-Southeastern Conference selection, won the Hayden Riley Scholastic Award. It was pointed out that Kaiser will graduate in three years and should earn his master's degree before finishing his basketball eligibility. He played this past season as a redshirt freshman.

## Surgery For Rogers

Roy Rogers, who will be a junior for the Alabama basketball team next year, has again under gone surgery on his knees. Unlike the usual knee problems of athletes, Rogers' ailment is bone, not ligament or cartilage. And rather than injury-related, it is congenital. Surgery was performed shortly after the end of the basketball season.

## No Recognition

In 1969 Alabama's pre-season football prospectus included upcoming senior defensive back Tommy Wade being suggested as an All-America candidate. Unfortunately, Wade suffered a broken leg and missed all of that '69 season. Imagine his surprise, then, when at the end of the year one of the many All-America football teams included Wade as honorable mention.

*Basketball Times*, perhaps the best of the national basketball publications, recently announced its all-region teams. It was surprising that not one Alabama player—not even the publication's transfer of the year, Jamal Faulkner—was listed among the 61 players in the South making either the All-America or All-South honor squads.

However, LSU guard Randy Livingston was an All-South selection. Livingston suffered a pre-season knee injury and did not participate this year.

## Unexpected Recognition

One of the primary achievements of Alabama's 1994 basketball team was Bama's January 8 upset of Arkansas, ranked number one at the time of that game in Tuscaloosa's Coleman Coliseum and eventual national champions. In recent years, *Sports Illustrated* has published special regional editions of its magazine to commemorate national and world champions. This year the magazine rushed to press with a special edition for sale in Arkansas and Memphis to honor the Razorbacks. However, one photograph, taking up the better part of two pages, purports to show Arkansas players celebrating a victory. Actually, those players are Crimson Tiders, celebrating the win over the Hogs.

## Polinsky Staying

Alabama Assistant Basketball Coach Gregg Polinsky withdrew his name from consideration as head basketball coach at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, and announced he would remain with the Crimson Tide. Polinsky, a 1981 graduate of Northern Arizona, had been considered the leading candidate for the job at his alma mater. Polinsky has been a top assistant at Alabama for the past eight years.

## Arkansas Traveler

Former Alabama Head Basketball Coach Wimp Sanderson has been named head coach at Arkansas-Little Rock of the Sun Belt Conference. After a year out of coaching, Sanderson landed the job where his son, Barry, has been the restricted earnings level assistant coach. Sanderson was given a three-year contract.

## Women's Awards

The greatest reward for the 1994 Alabama women's basketball team of Coach Rick Moody was its performance, reaching the Final Four and finishing with a mark of 26-7, a Crimson Tide women's basketball record.

At its annual awards banquet, Niesa Johnson was the most honored of the Crimson Tide players. She is the first Bama woman basketball player to earn first team All-America and she was honored for that as well as All-SEC and Academic All-SEC. She also won awards for most steals (93), most assists (237), and shared the co-captain's awards with senior Sharrona Alexander and the scoring with sophomore Yolanda Watkins (both players averaging 15.0). Watkins also won the rebound award (9.8) and was noted for making All-SEC.

Camillia Crenshaw and Madonna Thompson tied in the vote for the Shelly Pyles Hustle Award. Crenshaw also received the Dottie Kelso Inspirational Award, named for the Tide coach who died last September. Thompson was lauded for Academic All-SEC and won the best free throw percentage award (57 of 72 for 79.2 per cent).

Senior Betsy Harris won the three-point shooting percentage award (92 of 264 for 34.8 per cent) and Marlene Stevenson won the best field goal percentage award (66 of 121, 54.5 per cent). Carla Koonce and Sarah Smith were also honored for making Academic All-SEC.

## National Invitation

Alabama women's basketball player Niesa Johnson, who will be a senior next year, is one of 54 select players who has been invited to participate in the 1994 USA Basketball Women's National Team Trials.

The trials, which includes seven Olympians in the tryouts field, will be April 28-May 4 at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Finalists for the 1994 USA Women's World Championship/Goodwill Games Team and the USA Women's Select Team will be determined at the trials.

In addition to seven former Olympians, Johnson will compete for one of the 12 slots on the National Team with 41 players who have USA Basketball competition experience.

Johnson, who has been a member of the USA Basketball Junior National Team for the past two years, averaged 15.0 points, an SEC-best 7.2 assists and 5.0 rebounds per game last season. She was named All-America by Kodak, U.S. Basketball Writers Association, and *Basketball Times*.

## NFL Draft

Four former Alabama football players were



among those selected in the first two rounds of the National Football League draft. As expected, All-America cornerback Antonio Langham was the first Tider selected, going to Cleveland as the ninth overall pick in the first round.

Second round picks were wide receiver Kevin Lee to New England, wide receiver David Palmer to Minnesota and defensive end Jeremy Nunley to Houston.

#### Baseball Draft

It has long been noted that the most difficult college sport to recruit is probably baseball, because the professional baseball draft comes after players are signed. This year the baseball draft could affect Alabama's football recruiting.

Michael Coleman, an outstanding running back and defensive back at Stratford High School in Nashville who signed with Bama in February, may also have a chance to sign a baseball contract. He has been reported as saying that if he gets a six figure-offer, he will probably sign baseball. Otherwise, he said, he has received permission from Tide Head Coach Gene Stallings to play baseball as well as football for Alabama. In baseball Coleman is an outstanding outfielder and hitter. A pro scout was quoted as saying Coleman is one of the top potential draft picks in Tennessee and "probably the best position player in the state."

#### Recognition For Stallings

A recent edition of *Texas Aggie*, the alumni magazine of Texas A&M, featured Gene and Ruth Ann Stallings, but not for football. The article reported the Stallings have been awarded the 1994 Christian Service Award from Abilene Christian University and detailed many of the good works performed by the family. Ironically, the article detailed all of Stallings' professional life except for one thing: that he is the head football coach at

Alabama. Stallings is a 1957 graduate of Texas A&M.

#### Honors

While it is the nature of their jobs that University President Dr. Roger Sayers and Tide Head Football Coach Gene Stallings are frequently honored, at Alabama's recent Honors Day ceremonies among those inducted into Omicron Delta Kappa were their wives, Marla Sayers and Ruth Ann Stallings.

#### Hayden Riley

Hayden Riley, who played at Alabama and was head basketball and baseball coach for the Crimson Tide while, at the same time, serving as the primary football recruiter under Paul Bryant, has been honored by his hometown of Guin. The city's park was renamed the Guin-Hayden Riley Park and Riley was honored at a banquet in Guin April 23.

One of the most impressive records held by Riley during his 27 years at Alabama is that as head coach he had 100 per cent graduation rate of his basketball and baseball players who completed their eligibility.

Among those taking part in the ceremonies were his former associates at Alabama, Wimp Sanderson, Charley Thornton, Barry Shollenberger, Ken Donahue, Clem Gryska, former Tide player Gary Elliot, now head coach at North Alabama, and Riley's nephew, former Bama football star Major Ogilvie. The event was organized by former Alabama baseball player Eddie Franks.

Riley now lives at the Tuscaloosa Veterans Hospital.

#### Retirements

The Alabama Athletics Department is having an unusually large number of retirements this year, some of them prompted by a University policy encouraging early retirements. Those retiring include Associate

Director of Athletics for Compliance Dr. Gary White, Assistant Head Trainer Sang Lyda, Assistant Director for Tide Pride Dude Hennessey, Bryant Dining Hall Director Mrs. Billy (Loretta) Clements, and Assistant Bryant Dining Hall Director Mrs. Robert (Joanna) Jackson.

#### Letson Returns

Five months after surviving a near-fatal automobile accident, junior Greg Letson of Florence has returned to the Crimson Tide golf lineup. He was hospitalized for 32 days in November and December after his car was struck by an ambulance, leaving him with a serious concussion and numerous other injuries. Letson, who was Bama's leading performer last fall, shot 80-74-74-228 in his spring debut in the Billy Hitchcock Intercollegiate in Opelika.

#### Big Ten Champs?

Notre Dame has one of the nation's top baseball programs, and it was no great surprise when the Fighting Irish won two of three games against Alabama in Tuscaloosa earlier this year. Notre Dame Coach Pat Murphy said following the series that, "Alabama is in the middle of the pack in the Southeastern Conference. But I guarantee you, put Alabama in the Big Ten and they'd win it." Murphy also called Bama pitcher Bernie Bellard one of the best in college baseball. Ironically, Bellard was injured pitching against Notre Dame.

#### Aquatics Center Director

Edward W. Reed, Jr., has been named director of the Alabama Aquatics Center. He comes to Alabama from Brown University, where he was director of the Smith Swimming Center and head men's swimming coach. He replaces Debbie Warren, who was elevated to assistant athletics director last fall.

## 1994 Alabama Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Site
Sept. 3	Tennessee-Chattanooga	Birmingham
Sept. 10	Vanderbilt	Tuscaloosa
Sept. 17	Arkansas	Fayetteville
Sept. 24	Tulane	Birmingham
Oct. 1	Georgia	Tuscaloosa
Oct. 8	Southern Miss (Homecoming)	Tuscaloosa
Oct. 15	Tennessee	Knoxville
Oct. 22	Ole Miss	Tuscaloosa
Nov. 5	LSU	Baton Rouge
Nov. 12	Mississippi State	Starkville
Nov. 19	Auburn	Birmingham
SEC Championship Game		
Dec. 3	TBA	Atlanta

(All times to be announced except Southern Miss, which is Homecoming and will be a 2:30 p.m. CDT kickoff)

## 1995 Alabama Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Site
Sept. 2	Vanderbilt	Nashville
Sept. 9	Sou. Miss	Birmingham
Sept. 16	Arkansas	Tuscaloosa
Sept. 30	Georgia	Athens
Oct. 7	N.C. State	Tuscaloosa
Oct. 14	Tennessee	Birmingham
Oct. 21	Ole Miss	Oxford
Oct. 28	La. Tech	Birmingham
Nov. 4	LSU	Tuscaloosa
Nov. 11	Miss. State	Tuscaloosa
Nov. 25	Auburn	Auburn
SEC Championship Game		
Dec. 2	TBA	Atlanta



# Alabama's 1994 Spring Sports Results

## Baseball

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
11	* Alumni Game	3
	Winn-Dixie Showdown @ New Orleans	
3	UNO	0
3	Tulane	7
0	LSU	3
	Lake Area Classic @ Lake Charles, La.	
6	McNeese	7
2	Lamar	3
1	Tulane	2
11	Austin Peay	1
4	Austin Peay	2
4	@ West Florida	1
0	@ West Florida	5
14	St. Louis	0
	St. Louis cancelled, rain	
5	Notre Dame	2
4	Notre Dame	5
7	Notre Dame	10
11	Louisville	2
8	Butler	6
10	Butler	1
9	Michigan State	12
1	Michigan State	3
5	Michigan State	1
	Middle Tennessee ppd., rain	
8	@ South Carolina	4
0	@ South Carolina	10
2	@ South Carolina	3
3	@ South Florida	4
2	@ South Florida	5
4	* Boston Red Sox	6
	@ Fort Myers, Fla.	
1	@ Florida	2
5	@ Florida	12
6	@ Florida	8
18	Alcorn State	4
4	Tennessee	6
2	Tennessee	6
1	Tennessee	2
12	Tennessee Tech	0
6	Troy State @ Dothan	4
3	Mississippi State	4
7	Mississippi State	9
8	Mississippi State	12
4	@ Alabama-Birmingham	3
3	@ Ole Miss	2
5	@ Ole Miss	6
6	@ Ole Miss	18
April 27	Alabama-Birmingham	7:00
April 29	LSU	7:00
April 30	LSU	4:00
May 1	LSU	2:00
May 3	Samford	7:00
May 4	Auburn @ Montgomery	7:00
May 6	@ Arkansas	7:00
May 7	@ Arkansas	7:00
May 8	@ Arkansas	2:00
May 11	Radford	7:00
May 13	Auburn	7:00
May 14	Auburn	4:00
May 15	Auburn	2:00
May 19-22	SEC Tournament	TBA
May 26-31	NCAA Regionals	TBA
June 3-11	College World Series @ Omaha	

## Men's Tennis

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
Jan. 20-23	SEC Indoor Championships	
	@ New Orleans	
	(Individual play only)	
1	@ Minnesota	6
5	Indiana @ Minnesota	2
4	Alabama-Birmingham	3
2	Miami	5
Feb. 23-27	National Indoor @ Louisville	
0	Mississippi State	7
3	Notre Dame	4
3	Virginia Commonwealth	4
4	Middle Tennessee State	3
7	Southeastern Louisiana	0
6	@ LSU	1
	Blue-Gray National Classic @ Montgomery	
1	Duke	6
4	Drake	3
3	Arizona State	4
1	@ Tennessee	6
0	@ Ole Miss	7
2	@ Arkansas	5
3	@ Auburn	4
5	Kentucky	2
3	Georgia	4
1	@ Mississippi State	6
1	Florida	6
5	South Carolina	2
3	Vanderbilt	4
April 28-	SEC Championships	
May 1	@ Tuscaloosa	

## Men's Golf

DATE	TOURNAMENT
Feb. 19-20	Gator Invitational
	@ Gainesville, Fla. (3rd of 15 teams)
March 11-13	Golf Digest Invitational
	@ Houston, Texas (15th of 15 teams)
March 25-27	Southeastern Invitational
	@ Montgomery (4th of 18 teams)
April 1-3	Carpet Capital Classic
	@ Dalton, Ga. (4th of 16 teams)
April 22-24	Billy Hitchcock Invitational
	@ Opelika (9th of 20 teams)
May 13-15	SEC Championships
	@ Knoxville, Tenn.
May 19-21	NCAA Regionals
	@ Auburn
June 1-4	NCAA Championships
	@ Dallas, Texas

## Men's Track & Field

DATE	MEET	
March 25-27	Alabama Relays	7th
April 7-9	Sea Ray Relays	11th
	@ Tennessee	
April 16	Gator Invitational	11th
	@ Florida	
April 23	Crimson Classic	1st
April 29-30	Drake Relays	
	@ Des Moines, Iowa	
May 12-15	SEC Championships	
	@ Arkansas	
May 25	Twilight Qualifiers	
	@ North Carolina	
June 1-4	NCAA Championships	
	@ Boise, Idaho	

## Women's Tennis

DATE/ UA Score	OPPONENT	TIME/ Opp. Score
Jan. 21-23	Georgia Invitational @ Athens	
3	South Alabama	6
6	Oklahoma	2
1	@ Clemson	7
4	@ Tennessee	5
2	Kansas @ Arkansas	5
5	@ Arkansas	2
4	@ Vanderbilt	5
9	Purdue	0
7	LSU	2
5	Kentucky	4
4	@ South Florida	5
0	@ Florida	6
4	Wisconsin @ Miami	5
5	@ Miami	2
1	Georgia	8
6	Auburn	3
5	@ Mississippi State	1
4	Ole Miss	5
5	@ South Carolina	4
April 27-	SEC Championships	
May 1	@ Arkansas	
May 11-15	NCAA Championships	
	@ Georgia	

All times central

## Women's Golf

DATE	TOURNAMENT
March 4-6	San Jose Invitational
	@ Monterey, Calif. (9th of 21 teams)
March 25-27	Lady Gamecock Invitational
	@ Columbia, S.C. (4th of 14 teams)
April 8-10	South Florida Invitational
	@ Tampa, Fla. (7th of 18 teams)
April 15-17	Women's Southern Intercol.
	@ Athens, Ga. (6th of 20 teams)
April 29-	SEC Championships
May 1	@ Old Waverly, West Point, Miss.
May 12-14	NCAA Regionals
	@ East Lansing, Mich.
May 25-28	NCAA Championship
	@ Portland, Ore.

## Women's Track & Field

DATE	MEET	
March 25-27	Alabama Relays	1st
April 7-9	Sea Ray Relays	1st
	@ Tennessee	
April 16	Gator Invitational	1st
	@ Florida	
April 23	Crimson Classic	1st
April 29-30	Drake Relays	
	@ Des Moines, Iowa	
May 12-15	SEC Championships	
	@ Arkansas	
May 25	Twilight Qualifiers	
	@ North Carolina	
June 1-4	NCAA Championships	
	@ Boise, Idaho	

\* Exhibition Game  
All times central



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